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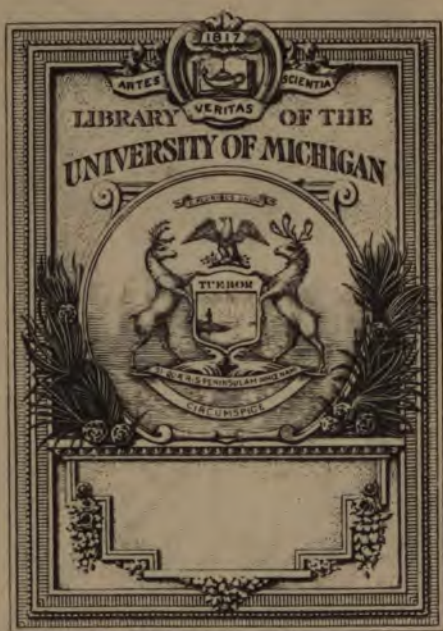
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AN,
ANALYSIS
OF THE
PRINCIPAL DUTIES
OF
SOCIAL LIFE:

WRITTEN IN IMITATION OF
ROCHEFOUCAULT:

IN A SERIES OF
LETTERS to a YOUNG GENTLEMAN,
ON HIS ENTRANCE INTO THE WORLD.

By JOHN ANDREWS, LL.D.

Qua ratione queas traducere leniter ævum.

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TO THE READER,

THE following Effays are written in Imitation of the Stile and Manner of ROCHEFOUCAULT, short and sententious, and are illustrated by frequent Allusions and Comparisons. These usually make stronger Impressions on Youth, and enforce the Lessons which they are designed to teach, more powerfully and effectually than any other Sort of Reasoning.



NEW
MAXIMS and REFLECTIONS
ON THE
PRINCIPAL DUTIES
OF
SOCIAL LIFE.

PREFATORY LETTER.

YOU are now entering into a period of life, wherein the hopes and expectations of your well-wishers begin to look for the good effects of that education which, with so much expence of time and assiduity, you have gone through to the satisfaction of your friends.

2 P R E F A T O R Y L E T T E R.

THE part you have now to act is very different from that you have hitherto been acting. Every step you took was under the immediate direction of precept and authority. Obedience alone was required, and was a sufficient security for success.

BUT you must consider yourself at present as one launching into the wide sea. Unless you are provided with all that is necessary for a long and dangerous navigation, you are sure to be shipwrecked.

THE difficulties you must expect to encounter are numberless: they are only to be surmounted by prudence and forethought. Of these, to speak metaphorically, you must lay in an ample store before you spread your sails and venture out of port.

STUDY and learning are but the threshold of worldly knowledge. It is experience alone that will completely qualify you to make an eminent figure, and to distinguish yourself in your station.

As

PREFATORY LETTER. 3

As experience is seldom gained unless at our own cost, you are not to promise yourself an exemption from perplexities and troubles: we are drawn into them through want of skill, much more than through imprudence. It is only by going through trials that we learn how to avoid them.

THE vigilance of the wise does not always prevent them from committing errors, and being entangled in difficulties, from which they find it hard to extricate themselves.

BUT let not this be a discouragement; it is mentioned only to guard you against that sanguine warmth of self-complacency incident even to the best dispositions. Young men who feel a superiority of genius, are so apt to found upon it infallible success, that when they meet with unexpected obstructions, on off their bias, and often to despondency.

4. PREFATORY LETTER.

To be forewarned of obstacles, enables us to face them with alacrity. When they come upon us unawares, they are accompanied with the additional aggravation of surprize; which alone is able to give weight to the smallest difficulties. By confusing our minds, it frequently does more prejudice than incumbrances of greater moment that are foreseen.

Be not, therefore, over-confident in the advantages derived from your education; it has laid a strong foundation, but the superstructure belongs to time and experience.

EDUCATION is like the spring, which, after the fairest promises, may be blasted. How often do we see young men, of whose future prosperity no doubt was entertained, deceive the expectations that every one had formed in their favour!

GENIUS is, doubtless, in some degree, an earnest of success; but if we attend to the
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PREFATORY LETTER. 5

the cultivation of that alone, and neglect those qualifications which the generality of men are more taken with, we shall often see our inferiors in parts leave us far behind them in the road to fortune.

THE majority of those who have been fortunate, are a convincing proof that a moderate capacity, when accompanied with carefulness and diligence, is sufficient to raise a man very high.

BY CAREFULNESS is understood, the clear-sightedness acquired by observing the behaviour of those with whom we are conversant, and the methods by which they have succeeded in their different undertakings.

DILIGENCE is a happy diffidence of meeting with further opportunities, which produces an eagerness to seize the first that offer, and to avoid procrastination.

6 PREFATORY LETTER.

THESE two qualities have effected as much as ever uncommon abilities and auspicious accidents have brought to pass; and are, in the usual course of things, of greater and more frequent efficacy.

FOR these reasons, endeavour to become possessor of both; and rest assured, that without a large measure of them, all other endowments will stand you in little stead.

THE acquisition you have made of knowledge in the polite arts, may be compared to a sum of money levied from the public; which, if intrusted to skilful managers, may prove serviceable to the state; but if it falls into weak or bad hands, will be wasted, or spent to no good purpose.

THOUGH you may have stored your mind with variety of laudable accomplishments, you are yet to learn the last and most important of all lessons,——the art of using them,

THE

PREFATORY LETTER.

THE number of years you have lived, has brought you to the borders of manhood, but the strength of your mind is yet in its infancy.

Now is the season to cherish and improve it, and to give the finishing hand to the work of juvenile years, by studying mankind, and adding practice to speculation.

YOUTH generally compleats us in virtue or in vice; and lays in that stock of good or evil which composes the residue of our lives.

In order to confirm you in a steady adherence to those morals and manners you have been so carefully taught, and in a determination to shun whatever may contaminate your character, the following Epistolary Effays are addressed to your perusal. You are to consider them as a repository of those maxims and sentiments that are to ~~—~~ in your progress ~~—~~ are the

8 PREFATORY LETTER,

the laborious result of years and long experience, and are founded on a close and continual study of human nature.

ENDEAVOURS have been used to enliven them, by calling in the assistance of such metaphors and comparisons, as might render them more acceptable to the imagination, and make a stronger impression on the memory.

THEY will, it is hoped, prove of some utility for your future behaviour and conduct: they will serve to point out to your recollection, the rules to be observed throughout the most material occurrences in life, as an index to a book directs us to the principal passages therein contained.

LET-

LETTER I.

ON THE

IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATION.

WE may begin by observing, that youth is the season of instruction, as manhood is of action, and age of repose.

EDUCATION is the manure that brings our innate qualifications to maturity: without it, the seeds of virtue and perfection implanted in us, instead of fructifying, are lost or perverted: courage engenders ferocity; the ray of wisdom that nature may have infused, is obscured, or degenerates into pride; and if we are blest with a propensity to goodness, we are liable to perpetual mistakes and misapplications.

EDUCA-

EDUCATION, like a passport, empowers us to appear in the world with safety and credit ; by inspiring a well-grounded confidence, it enables us to act our part with decorum.

A VEIN of rectitude pervades, if one may so express it, the notions and ideas of those who have been well educated ; it gives them a bias to justice and propriety, from which they never swerve so much as those who have been neglected in their younger days.

THE sentiments and inclinations of a well-educated person may, in some measure, be compared to a tree whose branches have been pruned and trimmed by an expert gardener, and which retains in its growth and appearance, ever after, an air of symmetry and proportion.

THE beauty of the mind is like agreeableness of deportment. The former seldom exists, unless it is formed and fashioned

IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATION. 11

ed in the dawn of sense and reflection ; as the latter is hardly attainable, unless our juvenile eye has imbibed from constant early precepts and practice, a just conception of what constitutes elegance of behaviour.

THE regularity attending a good education, accompanies us in our more advanced years : by introducing rule and order into our occupations, it enables us to go through much labour with little fatigue.

It is precisely the same as with an able officer who arrives at excellence in his profession by an assiduous conformity to military discipline. It is irksome at first, but through custom becomes familiar ; and at length incorporates, as it were, with all his motions, in the same manner as Cicero tells us the Roman soldiers considered their armour in no other light than as part of their ordinary dress.

By

By insuring the faculties betimes to a continual exertion of their power, they habitually afford us, on the various emergencies of life, an efficacious and inexhaustible fund of industry and application; which, like a trade learned in the first stages of youth, we can at all times exercise with readiness and facility.

You cannot too much prize the happiness that is fallen to your lot, in having received a liberal education. The inheritance that will be transmitted by your parents, may render you powerful and considerable in the society you belong to, but the influence of riches only goes a certain way: it is limited to our connections and dependants, and ends with our lives. But the splendour of cultivated talents shines beyond the circumference of our friends and acquaintance; it reflects a lustre on the country that gave us birth; it ennobles our name, and places us on a level with the first characters of a nation. If genius and abilities do not procure wealth,

IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATION. 13

wealth, they command admiration and praise, which, to a great mind, are above all other remunerations.

THESE are perishable ; but the former survive, and immortalize us in the minds of the intelligent part of mankind. Even during life, the pressures of the world cannot affect us, as they do the illiterate and unenlightened. We view things in their real colours, and are not slaves to those prejudices which either create or aggravate calamities. Finally, we die with the pleasing prospect of being useful to future generations, and with the consciousness of having filled with dignity the space of time allotted for our existence.

LETTER

LETTER II.

ON

GOOD NATURE AND BENEVOLENCE.

THE first lesson a man should be taught, is that of humanity: make it therefore the principal study of ~~your~~ life.

A HUMANE disposition is the most brilliant characteristic of human nature: it is the most powerful tie among men of superior sense and generous feelings. It is of the same use to render them acceptable and partial to each other, in preference to men of coarser make, as a badge of recognizance in war to distinguish the different parties.

As we are so circumstanced that none can subsist in absolute independence, we should be diligent in learning the art of ingra-

GOOD-NATURE, AND BENEVOLENCE. 15

ingratiating ourselves with others, which can only be done by convincing them we are kind-hearted and benevolent.

WE may define humanity, the practical recollection that we are, without distinction of persons, or privilege of condition, universally subject to the calamities of life; and that reciprocal assistance is a duty as much incumbent on the highest, as on the lowest members of society.

FORTUNE seems oftentimes to delight in the manifestation of this truth, by using the most humble instruments to extricate from their dangers and difficulties the greatest and most mighty of men.

IF opulence is our lot, we should never lose sight of the principal benefit deducible from it,—the facility of conciliating good will and respect through mildness and generosity.

16 MAXIMS AND REFLECTIONS ON

THEY to whom Fortune has been partial in the distribution of her favours, should consider themselves as persons escaped from a shipwreck ; whose duty it is to assist in saving the remainder of their companions who are yet in danger.

A CONTEMPTUOUS neglect of the unfortunate, and an ostentatious display of the superiority of our circumstances, flows equally from a mean heart and a weak head. Beside the injustice of making a merit of what is owing to accident, we prepare against ourselves a just and equitable refusal of aid and comfort, in case of alteration in our affairs. Men take a justifiable pleasure in punishing haughtiness : such punishment is authorized by the law of retaliation, which is always executed with no less readiness than equity.

TEMPER and moderation in prosperity, are like beautiful supporters to the coat of arms of an illustrious family.

THEY

GOOD-NATURE AND BENEVOLENCE. 17

THEY are the happy produce of a frequent recollection, that we hold all we have of Fortune by mere courtesy; and, like tenants at will, are liable to be ejected by her mere inconstancy and caprice.

HOWEVER willing to acknowledge this truth in theory, we seem determined to forget it in our practice; as if its absence from our memory could secure us from experiencing its reality and power.

IT is a truth which we ought to fix in the most conspicuous place in our remembrance; like those maxims and sentences which the nice and scrupulous observers of the Jewish law wore in large written capitals about their persons.

THE more extraordinary our endowments of mind and body may be, the more they are subject to instability, from that exquisite fineness of texture which constitutes their perfection.

THE favourites of Nature in this respect resemble the favourites of princes, who, when arrived to the summit of their ambitious views, find their situation more critical and dangerous than ever, from its excessive precariousness and uncertainty.

FROM these considerations, modesty should be uppermost in our thoughts and actions: 'tis like a tacit compact among men, by which the little submit without repining to the great.

SELF-EXALTATION, like a bad politician, who betrays his iniquitous views, will inevitably rouse the malignity of our inferiors to a confederacy, in order to depreciate those qualities by which we arrogate pre-eminence: like small states, which are always ready to unite in opposition to a greater, whose ambition is justly suspected.

THE power of wit and beauty is usually derived from good-nature and sweetness of
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disposition, as the strength of a realm depends mostly on a mild and humane government.

THE duration of the power of wit and beauty is terminated by pride, as the longevity of empires is obstructed by tyranny.

PERSONAL comeliness is of itself a sufficient recommendation. Such airs and gestures as indicate how much it elates us, are like a bad comment upon a good text.

WIT will never lose the prerogative of admiration, while content to range in quest of it abroad : but when, not satisfied with so ample an harvest, it grows enamoured with the forbidden fruit of home-conceit and self-applause, it forfeits all claim to any other.

FROM what has been premised, it results, that prosperity was designed as a general bounty, consigned to the management of the few, for the benefit of the many.

IT never was intended as a solitary possession, to be enjoyed exclusively without associates : on the contrary, it should be considered as a banquet, the enjoyment of which is enhanced by the number of partakers.

THE misery of others cannot be viewed, in any light, as an object of indifference. If it does not immediately affect our interest, it invades our cheerfulness and tranquillity, by the reflection, that what is another's case may become our own.

BUT the miseries and misfortunes of others concern us more than the generality seem to imagine. There is an indissoluble connection subsisting between all members of the community : the chain may, to the short-sighted and narrow-minded, be sometimes imperceptible ; but men of penetration know, that calamity, like an inundation, would in a short time overwhelm all, unless effectually obviated
by

by assisting the sufferers, through those means that compassion, experience, and good policy, will jointly suggest to men of equal feeling and prudence.

HENCE the numerous channels through which the generosity of the good and wise flows to the wants of the unhappy and the necessitous.

IN this light, which is that of sense and truth, misery becomes an object of equal sympathy and terror. 'Tis like a fire broken out in the neighbourhood; in the extinction of which it behoves you to be aiding, lest your own house should be involved in the conflagration :

OR, like an invader of the territories of your allies, whom you are bound to succour, lest their destruction should pave a way to your own.

POLICY should make us earnest to convince others, that we are not indifferent to their welfare; and probity should lead us to be sincere in our professions. The alliance of policy and probity is the golden rule of reason.

A just and elevated mind thinks no acquisition of such importance as the regard and favourable opinion of the public, obtained through deeds of benevolence and humanity. As it is the ultimate scope of such a man's desires, it affords him a perpetual feast; and soothes his soul in the same manner as the possession of an estate which we have raised by our own industry and application.

THERE is an inward satisfaction and triumph in the consciousness of being esteemed and beloved, that flatters the more, as it is a confirmation of the good opinion we so willingly entertain of our own merit.

THE

GOOD-NATURE AND BENEVOLENCE. 23

THE right of thinking highly of our deserts, never seems to be clear and authentic without the seal of public approbation. 'Tis like a claim at law ; which, whatever justice it may carry in our private apprehensions, yet never assumes, while undecided, that fullness of strength and validity which only a judicial determination has the power to confer.

GOOD-NATURE and Benevolence are the basis of all the virtues ; since they are not only the first promoters of justice and equity, but also the source of all public and private munificence.

GOOD-NATURE is a complacency in the pleasure and happiness, and a feeling for the pains and distresses of others, which prompt us to step, as it were, out of ourselves, in order to become their seconds in the field of humanity, either by countenancing their felicity with our joy, or alleviating their misfortune by our assistance.

24 MAXIMS AND REFLECTIONS ON

BENEVOLENCE is that expansion of the soul which enlarges all our views. We no longer look upon ourselves as the seclusive members of any separate society : the difference of climate and nation vanishes, to make room for personal worth alone.

BENEVOLENCE may be likened to that generous scheme of universal union projected by Henry IV. of France. It admits all men indiscriminately to the participation of those honours and rewards that are due to virtue ; and is persuaded that the general rights of Nature afford an ampler title to them than the partial laws of particular nations.

A PLACID benevolent disposition is the grand conservator of the peace of society : it operates in the common tenour of our conduct towards all, the same that love or friendship effect in our private attachments : our curiosity to discover the failings and imperfections of others, is lost in the enjoyment of their good qualities.

THE

GOOD-NATURE AND BENEVOLENCE. 25

THE mind of a benevolent man is like a well-administered kingdom ; where Impartiality sits on the throne, dealing out an equitable measure of favours to all persons, according to their respective proportion of merit ; willing to give audience to every recommendation that bears the stamp of some virtue or accomplishment, and shewing aversion and contempt for nothing but vice and folly.

LET-

LETTER III.

ON VERACITY.

NOTHING will sooner procure you respect, than a strict attachment to truth, and a contempt of falsehood.

As honesty in our actions is the safest road to prosperity, so is a constant adherence to truth in our words the surest way to general esteem.

THERE is a certain blackness in falsehood disgusting even to him that employs it. The reason is, that truth only being congenial to our nature, it suffers with difficulty a stranger that will infallibly soon or late destroy our character.

WE admit the help of falsehood, as we sometimes have recourse to those we despise, and with whom we should be ashamed to acknowledge any correspondence.

LIKE

LIKE venom whose infusion corrupts the whole mass of our blood, falsehood contaminates all our excellencies : their conspicuity serves only to increase suspicion and mistrust.

TRUTH is spoken with facility of expression ; but even the power of an iniquitous habit will not always give order and precision of words to falsehood.

THE former is like a natural river flowing gently from its source ; but the latter is like an artificial conveyance of waters through places where Nature is evidently forced.

As healthy looks denote a sound body, so perspicuity of speech declares an ingenuous mind : by the same rule, falsehood is no less discernible by incongruity, than a distemper by the alteration of our features.

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HOWEVER splendid your abilities, value yourself chiefly upon candour and openness; they are the most welcome introducers every where.

THE former are, at least, as much and as often dreaded as they are wanted; but the latter always inspire serenity and confidence.

A FREE and candid disposition passes current with all men; it is like a present of light weight and rich value, which the receiver may carry about him without trouble: but the superior parts of others are frequently like a burden, which we bear through mere necessity.

THE bare apprehension that we are cunning and artful, is often an insuperable obstruction to the most plausible schemes; while, on the contrary, the persuasion of our candour, like a solemn credential, removes hesitation and diffidence.

TRUTH.

TRUTH carries an air of authority that enforces persuasion: there is a sympathetic alliance and analogy between the body and the soul, that breathes out in our exterior visible deportment, and imperceptibly wins assent.

THE manner of our speaking, our voice, our aspect, equally contribute to ascertain whether we speak from conviction or from other motives.

PEOPLE seldom fail to distinguish by these between the simplicity and unaffectedness of plain unstudied truth, and that preparation of subtlety and craft which accompanies a concerted imposture.

TRUTH, in this respect, is like the legal pretensions of a lawful prince, which are manifested with more facility and clearness, and more readily understood, than the fallacious arguments of deers and usurpers.

30 MAXIMS AND REFLECTIONS ON

FALSEHOOD, on the other hand, is like a cracked vessel : we are sensible of the defect, though we cannot discover exactly where it lies.

THE dignity of truth, like the charms of real beauty, needs no varnish to heighten its lustre : the purer it is seen, the sooner it gains its end ; which is belief to our assertions, confidence in our promises, and reliance on our persons.

FALSEHOOD requires an intirely opposite method : it borrows all shapes and appearances to hide its deformity, as a woman of ill fame has recourse to dress and artificial ornaments, to supply the wants of her lost or faded attractions.

TRUTH is the sole origin of consistency in discourse, as a king is the only fountain of honour in his dominions.

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CONSISTENCY is the superlative degree of merit in conversation; like the royal image on coin, it stamps weight and value upon all we say.

To be consistent, is to unite sense and truth inseparably together: this only will procure us deference and consideration. Wit and pleasantry are but in the second rank: wit may be admired, and pleasantry may amuse; but the satisfaction resulting from them is only transitory; they may facilitate our admittance into company, but they never were known to produce affection or esteem. These are an assessment upon the heart, which only the qualities of the heart are entitled to levy; but wit and pleasantry are too commonly the offspring of a fertile head and a barren soul.

TRUTH is the health, and falsehood the sickness of reason.

TRUTH

32 MAXIMS AND REFLECTIONS ON

TRUTH is the parent of courage to the mind, as health is of strength to the body : the first adds fortitude to our thoughts, as the other does vigour to our motions.

TRUTH gives firmness to our behaviour. Like a man who knows he has got friends to support him, our expressions are bold, and our appearance resolute ; while the consciousness of falsehood influences like a flaw in a deed that invalidates the whole : it unmans us, and often baffles the most constitutional intrepidity, by that embarrassment which attends the fear of detection.

DISSIMULATION may sometimes be unhappily necessary, but never can be classed with the virtues. Great minds may occasionally condescend to use it ; but they always pay a price far above its worth, in the violence they are forced to put upon their inclinations.

WHEN we reflect how much of our dignity and estimation must be laid down when

when we take up dissimulation, well may we dismiss it as a mercenary who over-rates his hire.

DISSIMULATION often originates from the untimely want of prudence and discretion, yet audaciously lays claim to those titles.

WHEN improvidence and precipitation have hurried us into difficulties from which we are impatient to be delivered at any rate, in order to palliate the mean shifts and artifices we are driven to, we, usurpingly, qualify them with the name of circumspection, sagacity, or any other that may represent our conduct in an honourable light.

THIS is no more than a base imitation of ambitious potentates, who colour their unjust enterprizes with false manifestoes and sophistical reasonings.

BUT prudence does not so much assist in extricating us from

gencies, as in preventing them. It disclaims connection with artfulness and duplicity, as much as men of rank and quality shun the company and intercourse of the vulgar.

PRUDENCE is the close attendant of probity: this attachment is founded on the conviction of its indispensable necessity throughout the vicissitudes of life; and that, however all other helps and supports may fail us, yet we can never be totally undone while this single prop remains. Experience teaches, that, alone, it is able to retrieve us from the worst of situations; and may justly be compared to a fast friend, that never forsakes those who are true to him.

PROBITY is the parent of veracity, which is a conscientious alliance between our thoughts and words, that never permits the latter to betray the former.

VERACITY is the only root of all safe and salutary measures in private life, as
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VERACITY.

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an upright administration is the only lasting support of a state.

WHEN a man has acquired a reputation of veracity, he secures an ascendancy over the minds of others, which no consideration of genius, rank, or opulence, can confer. The homage we pay to wealth and station is interested, and merely external, and that we owe to capacity is seldom unaccompanied with envy: but truth establishes its claims in our hearts; we feel no compulsion in that internal reverence which it commands; we freely bestow it, like an equitable tax which a beloved sovereign receives from the loyalty and benevolence of his people.

SUCH a man is always sure to find attention, however he may be defective in elegance of person or appearance, or wanting in eloquence: the sense and integrity of his words and meaning preponderate with the wise, above all other considerations; while the most polished method of

address is void of influence, where fidelity to truth is questionable.

SINCERITY, in this case, is like a poor but loyal subject, whose homely treatment is more welcome to his prince, than the pompous entertainment of a suspected courtier.

THERE cannot be a clearer testimony of the purity of our hearts, than a fixed habit of speaking truth.

LIKE the house of Poplicola, which lay open to the inspection of every Roman, it shews, that nothing shameful is transacted there.

WHILE integrity is at the bottom of our designs, 'tis like a known easy language, that has no obscurities to decypher, and is written in fair and legible characters: we read our duty in it without difficulty, and are seldom liable to the commission of errors.

L E T.

L E T T E R IV.

O N

G E N E R O S I T Y.

A SHORT acquaintance with the world will convince you, that generosity is the noblest title in human society. Whatever accomplishments a man possesses, if he is not generously inclined, he is beneath him, who, having that single qualification, has no other.

A GENEROUS disposition outweighs every other virtue among men ; as, in the day of battle, courage alone is worth more than all other endowments without it.

GENEROSITY is a peculiar elevation of sentiments, that will not suffer us to be satisfied with our own private prosperity.

It produces a kindness and benignity of consideration that regulate, harmonize, and soften every motion of the heart, and restrain the impulse of every passion that might detriment or offend.

A GENEROUS man deems calumny and detraction no less disgraceful to the auditor than to the speaker; as, like obscenity, such topics are seldom introduced, unless a willingness is perceived to grant them reception and encouragement. He is not only scrupulous in his own treatment of the absent, but is zealous in preventing defamation, from a just persuasion, that silence in those cases would render him guilty of participation; in the same manner as a man becomes answerable for the mischiefs flowing from an unjust sentence, through the refusal of his testimony in a good cause.

INDULGENCE to slander steals upon us unawares. Our natural ambition to rise above others induces us, insensibly, to
 3 listen

GENEROUSITY.

listen to what degrades them from the rank they held in our estimation. Though we disapprove of malevolence in general, we have hardly honesty enough to discountenance it, when it pays a tribute to our vanity by lessening the worth of others.

CONSCIOUSLY to let unmerited aspersions prevail, is a tacit approbation of it, only the meaner for being indirect; it is availing one's self of another's villainy, when we dare not employ our own.

A PERSON of a generous disposition extenuates venial offences, and abets no stigmatisation, unless the interest of the community demand vice and infamy to be brought forth to public notice and chastisement.

HE delights in making as few examples as possible; like a humane commander, who spares the lives of his soldiers, and never commits them to the chances of war without absolute necessity.

40 MAXIMS AND REFLECTIONS ON

HE is slow to accusation and punishment, and, like a humane legislator, unwilling to be severe without the weightiest cause, in the execution of justice he remembers mercy.

HE inflicts correction with grief, and, like a dispassionate judge, hearkens not to wrath, but to the law.

A GENEROUS man takes no advantages, should he have the upper-hand of an opponent, whether in concerns of great or little importance : he is modest in success, and expresses no indecent exultation ; he behaves like a merciful conqueror, who uses his victory with moderation, and gives no loose to rage and resentment.

LIBERALITY of spirit adds to the lustre of every virtue, and is a security to their splendour by silencing the voice of envy.

WE may safely bid defiance to the malice of open or concealed enemies, while we
are

are protected by a character of beneficence. It frustrates the efforts of jealousy, and forces it to suppress the appearance of antipathy.

WE become in this instance like a state, whose reputation for public integrity, by securing the ready assistance of its allies, obliges its enemies to remain quiet.

As, while unable to hurt the object of their hatred, men stifle those emotions that betray spite and rancour, our adversaries can only repine at us in secret ; like courtiers, who dare not openly attack one who enjoys the favour of his sovereign.

ALL the qualities we derive from birth and nature, and all the accomplishments we acquire through art and study, receive their last polish from that grandeur and sublimity of sentiments that characterise a liberal mind.

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GENEROSITY is to the other virtues what a diadem is to the royal apparel; it completes the dignity of our character, and ennobles our thoughts and actions.

GENEROSITY is the patriotism of mankind.

It sets us above interestedness and narrow considerations: we cheerfully contribute to the benefit of others, and disdain to over-reach them, or profit by their unskilfulness or inadvertency. In this light, generosity may be considered as the pride of virtue.

In the social enjoyments of life, we are equally ready to exert our own endeavours, and to accept of all attempts to please. Our aim is not to shine alone, but also to render others entertaining, by calling forth their latent parts, and encouraging the diffident to put on a becoming assurance.

LIKE

LIKE a man who scorns to be treated at free cost, a liberal mind cautiously avoids the introduction of whatever can only divert at another's expence.

GENEROSITY resembles an act of universal toleration; it annihilates that selfish propensity to domineer, so inherent in our make; and which, like the fury of religious persecution, subjects all those to ridicule whose singularities differ from our own.

As few men are totally exempt from risible peculiarities, as well as more serious failings, the capital foe to society is a satirical intolerance, which, like an inexorable officer of the police, shews least mercy where most is wanted.

INTOLERANCE is a mixture of haughtiness and cruelty; we under-value others to over-rate ourselves; and triumph in their uneasiness, like inha

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who insult over the distresses of the conquered.

WHEN such methods of entertaining company, instead of meeting with detestation as nutriment to malice, are encouraged as incentives to pleasure; 'tis like a conspiracy against human nature, in order to make the worst we can of our condition.

THERE is not a more intolerable fault than unwillingness to bear with those of others: it is, in fact, no less than a general declaration of war against all mankind.

GENEROSITY, like an impartial mediator, reconciles these jarrings and differences of temper and ideas; it suspends our native proneness to hostilities against each other, from conviction that the most accomplished person has his foibles, as the best governed country its weak sides.

A LIBERAL temper is often the best protection against ourselves, and the surest

surest preservative against actions of which repentance is ever the consequence, in honest minds.

IN those unguarded moments when the torrent of wrath or petulance hurries men beyond their own purposes, and betrays them, as it were, into our hands, generosity steps in to their assistance, and shelters them from our anger and resentment.

INSTEAD of availing ourselves of a situation that selfishness would rejoice at, when reason lies in a manner prostrate, and the eye of vigilance is shut; our consideration is turned not to the advantages before us, but solely to the merits and justice of our cause.

THIS is the most illustrious of all victories, because the most difficult to obtain, that over our interest and passions.

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As generosity is the source of disinterestedness, it is no less the tomb of unlawful ambition.

LIKE a pacific monarch, whose equitable views are above improving to sinister purposes the broils and troubles subsisting among his neighbours, we reject all temptations to profit through the dissensions arising among individuals; and, instead of fomenting enmity, are studious to re-unite the disaffected.

LIBERALITY of mind is a school wherein those lessons of divinity are taught, from which no sect ever dissented.

THE dictates of this school are truly orthodox and celestial: by listening to them human nature is sublimed, as metals through fire are disencumbered of their dross, and attain their highest degree of purity.

THIS

THIS school is like a council of war composed of heroes and conquerors, who are above devising common achievements: it infuses none but the most exalted sentiments.

WE are no longer swayed only by those maxims that barely regulate society, and settle the rights and duties of human intercourse: these we leave to the herd of mankind, who obey them through necessity, and are governed by motives of fear. But we look to higher institutions: we act from principles of universal beneficence, and think ourselves as responsible for not seeking and improving every opportunity conducive to the welfare and happiness of others, as the former deem themselves culpable for committing any deed positively detrimental to society.

LIKE the pious and diligent almoner of a charitable association, he descends into the particular necessities of

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of domestic life, and rejoices at the discovery of distress which it is able to relieve.

OUR munificence is only limited by our abilities, and we aspire at an increase of these but to extend the former; as a patriot administration aims at an augmentation of power, only for the sake of more effectually serving the state.

To sum up the whole, generosity divests us radically of selfishness in our own case, and of partiality in that of others. Like the representation of Justice, we become blind to private views, and totally submit ourselves to the guidance of that public spirit which illuminates the understanding of all those who seek it with earnestness, and adhere to it with fidelity.

LET-

LETTER V.

ON THE

SENSE OF EQUITY, AND THE LIGHT
OF CONSCIENCE.

YOU will find in your inward feelings, if duly attended to, a fund of rules for your conduct, that will never lead you astray.

THE world is an immense community; for the welfare of which, its numberless constituents are, by a tacit compact, universally united to each other.

HUMAN society may be likened to a co-partnership in trade; every member of which is intitled to an interest adequate to the capital which he puts into the common stock.

OWNERS

OWNERS of ample possessions are the trustees of Providence ; which allows them great commissions, on account of the greatness of the work they have to perform.

THE dispensation of human prosperity is lodged in their hands, as that of public money in those of a treasurer : they are bound to obviate by their interposition the complaint of an unequal repartition of things, as he is by his station obliged to make good every legal demand upon the state.

THE felicity designed for human nature resembles the light proceeding from celestial bodies ; which is not confined to any sphere in particular, but irradiates the whole creation.

WHENEVER men by their conduct aim at a larger impropriation than is their due, 'tis like infringing a decree of government made for the use and benefit of the whole.

IN

SENSE OF EQUITY, &c. §1

IN order to direct our judgement in this necessary settlement of the reciprocal claims of society, Nature has given us the sense of equity; which, like an exact and faithful accountant, assigns to every one his proper share.

A MIND fraught with equity is like a central pillar, on which the edifice of Hope and Confidence can rest with security.

LIKE a trusty keeper of public stores, it embezzles none for private emolument; and as an upright minister in the distribution of places and employments, it is above illicit partialities and selfish reservations.

HOWEVER inviolable our attachment may prove to the maxims of honour and honesty in the civil transactions of life, we are often apt to pay no attention to those nicer precepts of reciprocal duty, in the observance of which, not only the delicacy and perfection of the system consist, but the

How common is it to arrogate undue merit to ourselves ! how reluctantly do we acknowledge the deserts of others ! and how ready are we to diminish, or even, if we can, to annihilate them in those from whom we apprehend a competition !

PRIDE, self-love, and pusillanimity, are the three demons that instigate us on such occasions. Lifted under the banner of ignorance, their primitive parent, they enter into a blind combination to obstruct the course of reciprocal equity, in the appreciation of each individual's worth.

PRIDE is intirely immersed in its own importance, and, like a monarch surrounded by flatterers, neither knows itself nor others.

SELF-LOVE benumbs and deadens all sensation for others. While we fancy ourselves secure, we set their welfare at a distance from our thoughts ; as the owners of a cargo who have insured their property,

ty, are indifferent about the fate of the vessel.

PUSILLANIMITY confines and depresses our heart, and hangs like an unwieldy weight on all its motions.

LIKE a cowardly associate who abandons his companion in the hour of danger, we have not soul enough to concur in doing justice to those who claim it from us.

PRIDE, self-love, and pusillanimity, are the sworn foes to candour and openness in social intercourse, by banishing condescension, benignity, and confidence.

PRIDE is that excess of complaisance to ourselves, which excludes all notice of others.

SELF-LOVE is that warmth of attachment to our concerns, which like a fire destroys all other considerations.

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PUSILLANIMITY, the retainer and delegate of self-love, is that interested apprehension of our own weakness, which overrates the strength of others, and aims to deprive them of every advantage, in order to reduce them beneath our level.

IGNORANCE is their common parent. Were we thoroughly sensible of the ridicule attending self-exaltation, of the necessity of universal benevolence, and of the meanness of depreciating others, we should neither be proud, selfish, nor pusillanimous.

THE cure of this pernicious ignorance is, often to dwell upon the recollection, how circumscribed the faculties of the brightest individual must naturally be, and how lost and forlorn we find ourselves, when left alone to our single powers; how odious we render ourselves by avidity and rapaciousness; and how contemptible, by undervaluing others, and refusing them their due.

THIS

THIS consideration will prepare our minds and hearts for the reception and exercise of that sense of justice, which, like a charter of necessary knowledge, is freely bestowed on all who are willing to receive it.

EQUITY is that unerring balance wherein conscience weighs the worth and demerit, the righteous claims and wrong pretensions of all; and where self is thrown into the common scale, without predilection.

As by an incroaching disposition in those who are at the helm of states, nations are set at variance; in the same manner private life is disturbed, and rendered unhappy, by the selfish temper of individuals who preside in families and domestic societies.

THE ground-work of equity must be laid in the dawn of reason — must be-

gin betimes to repress the inordinate flights of an ambitious imagination,

THOUGH we make it a duty to condemn ambition in general, nothing is more usual than to infect inexperienced youth with improper ideas of grandeur and glory, by setting before them as examples worthy of imitation, precisely those which ought most carefully to be avoided.

THEIR ideas of equity are quickly perverted or obscured, when they are witnesses of the admiration and praise that are so lavishly paid to the memory of men, whose actions, though wonderful, are not reconcileable to justice.

HAD more care been taken to teach lessons of moderation to Charles the Twelfth of Sweden, during his infancy, it is probable his reign would have been attended with fewer calamities.

To become great and famous, is the first principle inculcated; and a noble one it is, if rightly understood. To be great, is to be wise, learned, sagacious, brave, just, and generous. All these lead naturally to fame, as the proper reward of greatness; which, according to the foregoing explanation, is in fact nothing more than goodness.

BUT as we delight in pompous titles and appellations, Vanity, to please us, has annexed the name of great to what is good, in order to stimulate our ambition to perform with warmth and zeal, what, otherwise, the dictates of reason and duty would not influence us to do with equal fervour.

HENCE, as there are many things which, though far from being good, yet retain the appearance of greatness, we are often hurried away by false notions of grandeur, and lose sight of objects which alone

alone are truly great. Like a pilot who has mistaken the right land-mark, we stray from the proper estimation of things, and are lost in the pursuit of courses equally ruinous and criminal.

NATURE, however, has provided a diligent monitor to recal us from this erroneous track. This monitor is Conscience. We are often offended at the severity of its reproofs; but, like a faithful friend resolutely bent on reforming us, it stands the brunt of all our capricious humours.

CONSCIENCE, like a royal standard hoisted aloft in public sight, is conspicuously uppermost in all our thoughts.

It is in some measure the shadow of the soul; as it regularly keeps pace with all its motions, and neither magnifies nor lessens their proportional worth or demerit.

CON-

CONSCIENCE is the interpreter of the laws of Nature, and acts by deputation from Heaven, as a king's vicegerent by the royal commission.

LIKE a skilful counsellor at the bar, it assists with immediate advice in the most difficult cases; and as an expert judge, decides expeditiously and convincingly upon our designs.

COMPLIANCE with the dictates of conscience is like a soldier's obedience to his general: we have no chastisement to apprehend.

CONSCIENCE, like the rays of the sun, both warms and enlightens: it shews our duty, and inspires with courage to perform it.

A CONSCIENTIOUS discharge of our obligations, is to the soul what is to the body: as this preserves

so does the other from the pangs of remorse.

THE docility and adherence to the admonitions of this internal tribunal, is sometimes like the observance of those rules that have been discovered by mathematical researches: though ignorant of their theory, we know them to be right in practice.

THE light of Conscience pierces through every passion and prejudice: if infallibility is separable from the Divine Essence, this original instinct of our nature is certainly its brightest and purest emanation.

IN the mean time, let an exact and rigid sense of integrity be the ruling principle of your conduct. Let the motives of your actions be divested of fear and servility. To be honest merely from the dread of punishment, argues a meanness of disposition which excludes all pretences to merit.

'Tis

'Tis like living in subjection to our lawful sovereign, because we dare not revolt.

THIS frame of mind is necessary to constitute a man of real probity. Nothing is strictly just and laudable, but through the causes that influence our determinations.

THIS zeal and reverence for equity, founded solely on its excellence and dignity, and unfullied with sordid views of security and interest, may be compared to a sentimental attachment to the person we profess to love, purified from the dregs of worldly considerations, and devoting us to the object of our passion wholly for its sake.

As only true love can affect the heart, only true honour can ennoble the mind. As the one produces tenderness and sympathy, so does the other elevation and nobleness of sentiments. The first harmonises our thoughts, and polishes our behaviour; the second exalts our

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stamps the mark of greatness upon our actions.

As love cultivates the soft and social, and as honour promotes the sublime virtues; neither the mind nor the heart can attain to any eminent degree of refinement, without the assistance of both in their genuine purity.

HAPPY the man, whose disposition to equity flows much less from the knowledge of his duties, than a moral affection for virtue, imbibed from a happy education; as love is often instilled through acquaintance in infancy.

UNLESS we are actuated by warmth and inclination to espouse the cause of justice, we soon deviate from it, if no emoluments attend our perseverance; as we relinquish a woman whom we courted for her wealth, when that charm subsists no longer.

THE

SENSE OF EQUITY, &c. 67

THE time of probation for substantial unfeigned probity, is when the bars of discovery and chastisement are removed from our apprehensions, or when vice offers more tempting rewards than virtue : in the same manner as the true season to prove our loyalty to our prince, is when sedition attempts to fetter his due authority, and when it is become safer to side with rebellion than with legal obedience.

EQUITY should reside in our heart, and not in our fears. Unless it possesses that capital seat of the human system, its power is but weakly founded ; as a sovereign cannot completely assume that name while his metropolis refuses to recognize him.

ASSIDUITY in the consideration and study of equity, produces the same effect on the mind, as beauty does on the eye ; we are equally struck with admiration, respect and love.,

WHEN

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WHEN this happy veneration for rectitude has taken possession of the soul, it resembles a strong citadel, which the violence of rebellious passions may often assault and press very close, but can never totally reduce.

As integrity is in a great measure its own reward, so is dishonesty not less its own punishment. If vengeance should not rise from any other quarter, like the scorpion, it will do execution on itself.

CONSCIENCE never grows so callous, but we are moved at the recollection of the injustice we have done to others.

SELDOM can the most obdurate refrain from feeling for the misfortunes of others: but when to this the consciousness is added of being accessory to their woe, it cannot fail proportionally to increase the painful sensation which Nature is liable to experience at the sight of distress.

BUT

BUT were we so basely corrupt and dead to sensibility, as to center all in self, even there we shall not be safe: we shall be haunted by those daily proofs, that teach how unavailing the artifices of villany usually prove against the detection of guilt; and how often, in despite of darkness and secrecy, it falls out even by the ordinary concurrence of events, that delinquents betray themselves by those very measures which they had planned for their security.

A MAN'S worth or demerits always emerge at last: the most plausible appearances do not prevent the native alertness of our curiosity from prying into each other's real character.

BUT should we succeed in the concealment of our infamy from the public, we cannot fly from that disquietude which necessarily follows those accidental discovery of which must give a mortal wound to our reputation.

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THIS disquietude acts the part of a severe acquaintance, who knows of our guilt, and is perpetually threatening to divulge it.

WHEN the power of civil justice fails, Nature erects a tribunal in our own imagination, that immense fund of rewards and punishments ; whence, as from an inexhaustible treasury, supplies are everlastingly drawn to protect the good, and prosecute the bad.

As imagination is a zealous friend to innocence, it is no less an inexorable foe to guilt ; and, like an unpitying executioner, purposedly holds the axe in our sight.

THOUGH out of the reach of open condemnation, we still are doomed to be the victims of private remorse, and to act the most excruciating of all parts, that of self-tormentors.

As

As the manifestation of our villany is an event we look for incessantly, we are in the situation of a criminal that is ill concealed, and hears the gradual approach of his pursuers.

IN the mean while, we lose our relish for the comforts of life; and the most pleasurable ties of social intercourse become insipid.

WE grow strangers to confidence in others, from the consciousness we deserve none ourselves. We suspect professions of esteem and affection, from the conviction that we are not intitled to any: our very rest is not secure; for even dreams infest us there, and anticipate the blackness of our waking prospects: we are like a malefactor on the eve of execution, who suffers in his mind all those tortures which are to be inflicted on his body.

THE forsaking of probity for interest like abandoning a beautiful

wife, in preference to a prostitute. The former, devoted to us from the purest motives, remains the invariable partner of our evil as well as of our prosperous days ; and by her loveliness and sincerity, can give charms to misfortune and care. But the attachment of the latter is only pretended and transitory : the day of adversity puts a period to it ; and she proves her baseness, by leaving us the moment we begin to want her.

Thus while our life is upright, we command esteem and respect. Whatever our circumstances may be, still our name is mentioned with praise. The consciousness of rectitude beams a ray of comfort to the soul, in spite of all the storms of calamity. But if we embrace contrary maxims, though, during the sunshine of precarious success, Hypocrisy may wear the mask of attachment, she throws it off as soon as the hour of tribulation is come, and resigns us to those horrors that await on distress aggravated by guilt and shame.

THERE is an imprudence in dishonesty which betrays a weak mind no less than a bad heart: it fully verifies the proverb, that "Honesty is the best policy."

THE folly of departing from integrity in the transactions of private life, is not unlike that of a public traitor to his country. This latter, deluded by the phantoms of ambition or revenge, for the sake of uncertainties, encounters almost inevitable ruin. The former, enslaved by the prospect of lucre, affronts impending danger; and sets less value on the peace of his life, than on the chance of succeeding in attempts that may destroy his credit.

PUBLIC execration, or private wretchedness, no man escapes, who unwisely throws aside the consideration of what is due to others, in order to act as if he owed no regard but to himself; and who, for the uncertain gratification of unlawful views, madly consents to incur the risk of losing the title of an honest man.

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THIS loss is the greatest that can befall a member of society : no gain or advantage of any denomination is ever able to repair it : it is like the severing of a limb from the body, which is thereby disfigured ever after.

WHEN the numerous motives are reviewed, that should induce men to remain inviolably faithful to the rules of integrity, nothing but absolute infatuation seems to be sufficient to alter their conduct. Evident ruin threatens them on every side, the instant they quit that only sure ground of security. 'Tis like an unskilful general, who, by rashly abandoning an advantageous post, delivers himself into the hands of his enemies.

To conclude : Whatever difficulties may surround you, whatever temptations may assail, rest assured, that improbity will increase the first ; and that the last will vanish like an illusion before the eye of reason,

WHEN

WHEN Selfishness displays its promissory views, turn from them as from the head of Medusa, the fabulous power of which is realized in those who look too steadfastly on their allurements. Honour dies within us, and our souls are petrified to all noble sensations.

SHOULD the attractions of Pleasure invite you to stray from the dictates of conscience, remember they are sirens that only intice to destroy. Fasten yourself immovably to that sole pillar of safety,—the sense of your duty ; as Ulysses is said to have chained himself to the mast of his vessel, to prevent his yielding to their snares.

LETTER VI.

ON

GRATITUDE,

REFLECTION and experience will teach you that gratitude is a qualification without which we are unfit for, and unworthy of, society.

It includes the two fundamental virtues of justice and benevolence; and is the most authentic ratification of a person's deserving the benefits he has received.

Want of gratitude has long been proverbially deemed the highest reproach to human nature.

When we fly from the face of our benefactor, it can only proceed from a narrow disposition; for he that feels the richness of his good will, rejoices to find occasions
to

to manifest it, as a man of true valour is glad of an opportunity to signalize himself.

'Tis impolicy to shun the person whose friendship we have experienced; he will either suspect you of ingratitude, or, which is worse, of treachery and deceit.

THERE is, besides, an injustice unworthy of a manly soul in avoiding the presence of a benefactor: 'tis robbing his sight of that object which must confer happiness upon him, from the recollection of his generosity.

A CCANDID and chearful deportment with those by whom we have been obliged, does honour to us and to them too: it shews that we are sensible of their kindness, and that we place confidence in them; which is the highest compliment a man can pay to another.

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GRATITUDE, like all the other virtues, is in the mind. When the burden of benefits sits heavy, 'tis plain they are not placed on a proper object: we only feel their weight from the consciousness of our reluctance to bestow them.

WHOEVER has been obliged by many, instead of repining at his lot, should rejoice that he has been found worthy of notice; since, generally speaking, none but those who deserve some, ever meet with any.

HE that is not of a grateful turn, is lost to half the enjoyments of life and society.

WE so daily call for the helping hand of each other, that they who requite a piece of kindness merely from the rule and principle of decorum, deny themselves one of the most agreeable sensations in nature,—the pleasure of sentimental attachment to their benefactor.

WHEN a man has established a character of gratitude, he seldom fails to prosper. We are all ready to give, where we have reason to promise ourselves a proper return; and Providence has kindly ordained, that even the greatest may often stand in need of the least.

THERE is also a well-founded prepossession in favour of a grateful man. This virtue is of so amiable a texture, as never to go alone. Experience has repeatedly shewn, that a grateful person is usually very deserving in other respects.

A SINGULAR felicity attends the character of one whom many have concurred in obliging: it raises an emulation in men to outdo each other in their acts of kindness. Nothing is more common than to serve a man, upon hearing that others have interested themselves in his favour.

GRATEFULNESS to our friends is a constant and efficacious discharge of our duty; 'tis a sort of perpetual payment, th

ample interest in the continuation and addition of favours.

A GRATEFUL person not only encourages his benefactor's kindness, but invites the beneficence of others, by the prospect of meeting with the same tribute of gratitude which he hath paid to the former.

As ingratitude is deemed a proof of the utmost depravity, its contrary naturally implies a most excellent disposition. Of this the attractive power is such, that, notwithstanding we have often no reason to promise ourselves any other emolument than the pleasure of obliging; yet that alone is so cogent and persuasive, where an engaging turn of mind is found in the object of our beneficence, that we are satisfied with that alone, and seek no other recompence of our generosity, than the contentment arising from its exertion.

LET us never hurry our gratitude; it loses its merit by endeavouring to give too speedy a satisfaction.

MEN

MEN naturally delight in seeing others obliged to them. Were it not that the necessity of things generally renders obligations reciprocal, they would rather enjoy the gratitude of the mind, than receive their actual payment by a requital of good offices.

So far is the expression of gratefulness by a parity of services from being a proof of it, that it often proceeds from a circumscribed selfish temper, unable to bear the thoughts of another's having any interest in our bottom.

It not unfrequently happens after this repayment, that men of hollow hearts, thinking themselves disengaged from further ties, have acted with as much unfriendliness to their benefactors, as if the mere replacing a deed of kindness with another, had dissolved all further obligation.

THE apparent desire of being grateful, is, doubtless, more acceptable

ted mind, than the action by which we study to display our gratitude. It is in general more usual to hear persons complain of the ingratitude of others, from their neglecting to shew their cordiality and remembrance of benefits received, than from having omitted to testify it by deeds.

GRATITUDE is the foundation of the most intimate and strictest friendships; owing to the discovery of that sensibility of soul which is the principal ornament of our nature, and the strongest link of society.

THERE are so many methods of shewing gratitude, that none ought to be solicitous on that account: it appears sufficiently of itself; and, like love, if it exists, will immediately be seen.

THERE is a strong affinity and resemblance in both these passions: they are almost equally perceptible in our actions,
and

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and there is a striking similitude in their various effects.

GRATITUDE, like love, is more binding to a magnanimous temper, without the external assistance of serviceable proofs, than all these can be, if unaccompanied with that readiness and fervour which peculiarize a grateful heart.

If we recapitulate the most signal actions that adorn ancient or modern history, we shall not find a greater number effected by love than by gratitude.

ONE might justly define it a composition of generosity, friendship, and love; as it is questionable which of these three motives is predominant.

GRATITUDE carries with it all the warmth of generosity, all the warmth of friendship, and all the attachment

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TRUE gratitude excludes all interested considerations; and, instead of measuring its returns by the benefits received, only reflects on the intention of the donor.

LIKE charity, which interprets all things for the best, a man of gratitude is even willing to attribute services rendered him, to better motives than those which really prompted them; and is rather apt to reward the goodness of the effects, than to remember the badness of their cause.

L E T-

LETTER VII.

ON

MAGNANIMITY.

BE fully persuaded, that a great soul is founded on a good one. Magnanimity is a diadem that virtue only confers a title to wear.

WE often hear men extolled for the greatness of their souls, who ought rather to be stigmatized for the violence of their passions.

MAGNANIMITY is often attributed to pride, hatred, revenge, capriciousness, and even to indolence.

How often do men refuse, from grounded notions of self-dignity

G

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benefits from those to whom they ought in no wise to blush for being indebted.

How often do spite and rancour prompt us to scorn the acceptance of any service from those who have been the open avowed subjects of our enmity, and who still remain the secret ones of our ill will !

How often does a vindictive temper hurry a man into dangers, which, but for the sake of gratifying his private malice, he would most carefully avoid !

How often, from a whimsical disposition of mind, unattentive or unable to discern its real interest, are fortunate occasions overlooked or slighted, which want of penetration thinks proper to ascribe to a noble spirit of disinterestedness !

How often, finally, does a torpid, inactive, listless habit of body or mind prevent us from engaging where various gratifications powerfully invite our endeavours !

ours! while unexperienced observers imagine, that a superiority of soul sets us above those acquisitions.

A MAN is never truly magnanimous, unless the passions and desires he denies compliance to, have put his reason to the severest trial. Where appetite is not strong, there is but little merit in curbing it.

MAGNANIMITY therefore is a full knowledge and a feeling sense of that you abstain from, with an earnest propensity to possess it, both subdued to the government of reason.

SOME actions, in appearance great, may be performed without any mixture of magnanimity in their motives; whilst others, for want of that exterior splendor, derive no merit to their authors; like rivers whose original springs are unknown, from long running under ground.

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MAGNANIMITY, like a monarch in disguise, will sometimes dwell among the lowest conditions of mankind.

HOWEVER unimportant the opportunities of displaying it may seem, it loses nothing of its genuine greatness ; like an eminent personage, whose condescension to inferiors never diminishes the respect that is due to his rank.

HE that wants magnanimity, travels through life without its most necessary provision.

THERE are so many occasions of exerting it, that we are perpetually at a loss, even on the most trifling occurrences, without its assistance.

'TIS an error to think that magnanimity belongs only to great and extraordinary emergencies : it enters into the most minute transactions ; and its presence or absence often decides of a man's character
in

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in such instances as are seemingly uninteresting.

As magnanimity is that turn of mind which enables a man to withstand the heavier oppressions of fortune, and to rise superior to great calamities ; so in the more humble and ordinary scenes, it preserves him from betraying a childish impatience at smaller disappointments, and places him above the consideration of trifles.

DANGERS and crosses, vexations of mind and body, are the general map we must give a thorough and assiduous inspection to, ere we pretend to set out on the journey of life with any reasonable expectation of acquitting ourselves successfully.

To face these enemies, two companions must be selected of indispensable necessity ; the one is circumspection, the other magnanimity. But as, with all the watchfulness and care our nature is capable of, we must not promise ourselves exemption from trou-

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bles and perplexities of various kinds, magnanimity is the champion to keep nearest to us. When the other is foiled, this one still remains unconquerable, and will retrieve us from those difficulties which the dexterity of the other could not prevent.

THOUGH magnanimity generally proceeds from our native disposition, yet it may be acquired, as well as other valuable qualifications. The seeds of all the virtues are in our heart, and either perish through neglect, or improve by cultivation.

IMPETUOSITY and hastiness of temper are the capital foes to magnanimity; which never dwells separate from coolness and deliberation.

A SEDATE and placid constitution of mind is the fittest soil for magnanimity to prosper in; as the culture of it depends on thought and judgement.

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MAGNANIMITY is a welcome, pleasing title : it gratifies our natural propensity to all that is shewy and splendid, much more than those modefter terms of moderation and patience ; and yet these are the real ingredients of what is called magnanimity.

BUT men would possibly be less ready to obey the dictates of moderation, if it spoke not in the heroic stile of greatness of spirit, disinterestedness of soul, contempt of meanness, and the like ; as the appearance and dress of things affect us more than the things themselves.

FOR this reason we ought thankfully to confess our obligation to those assistants and comforters of human nature, whose clear-sightedness into our intellectual system invented that multiplicity of denominations so agreeable to fancy. Of these, our choice may fix upon *if* depict things in those colours that w our taste most pleasurably, most effectually on our practice.

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LEAVING therefore patience and moderation to those who delight in the shade, let magnanimity be the word with those aspiring minds who love to triumph in their virtue.

BUT let them also be cautious, lest the leaven of ostentation be not mixed in too great a proportion; for their whole purport will be lost, if the eyes of men should once discover that the world's applause is courted, rather than the approbation of their own reason.

As the discharge of our duty, while not resulting from pure principles, is faithless and feigned; so that magnanimity which has no further existence than within the prospect of men, is false, and not to be depended on: as it is founded on vanity, it has no solid support.

GRANDEUR of soul consists in serenity of mind and fortitude of heart: conscious
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innocence is the only basis on which this column of internal greatness can be raised.

REAL magnanimity has the sole and special privilege of making the most of all the pleasing, and the least of all the disagreeable, occurrences of life.

MISFORTUNES having their weight in our own disquietude, we certainly have it in our power to lighten, nay, often totally to defeat and bid them defiance, by suppressing that needless tribute of sorrow and despondency, which weakness and folly are so ready to pay without the approbation of reason.

IF we suffer reflection to act its part, and will be at the pains to keep the voice of prejudice at a distance, grief and agitation, like a tempest whose violence is quickly spent, subside very soon into a calm; and magnanimity, like

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ter cloudy weather, beams forth and obliterates all the former scene.

TIMIDITY and irresolution are not incurable diseases, unless the intellects themselves are affected : while these remain sound, no spiritual distemper can be mortal : judgement and reflexion, like proper medicines to a good constitution, are always able to effect a cure,

THAT debility of soul which enfeebles and enervates our disposition, is generally the offspring of ignorance, and neglect of the mind.

THE ground-plot of magnanimity is a rectitude of thinking, imbibed in the very commencement of thought ; which, like a polar star, directs our ideas, and keeps them in the right track.

WHENCE came it of old, that some nations inherited, as it were, a traditional
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MAGNANIMITY. 99

magnanimity, conveyed from father to son, through the succession of centuries! Whence could this proceed, but from a peculiar strain of education, begun in earliest infancy, and carried progressively through the stages of youth to the period of maturity.

THIS manifestly evinces Nature to be far from incorrigible; since it were absurd to suppose, that in those countries all men were born equally magnanimous: not to mention, that we daily see proofs, that persons originally of unpromising effeminate habits, have happily reformed, and become patterns of every manly accomplishment.

HENCE we are taught how capitally 'tis necessary, in the very preliminaries of education, to infuse that spirit of firmness and stability, which always prove the most lasting support of mankind, considered as separate individuals, and members of the community.

IT lays the strongest foundation of virtue; which is never complete, unless it is resolute and intrepid, not to be moved either by threats or promises.

IN private life, it prepares us to act upon all emergencies with candour, friendliness, and honour.

A PERSON of magnanimity is above those unnecessary niceties that perplex the intercourse of society : as he is above self-concealment, every one knows what he has to expect or to apprehend from him : his friends rejoice in the reliance which his character gives them upon him, and even his foes are obliged to respect that elevation of soul, which scorns to deceive them with a shew of good will.

IN public affairs, none but men of magnanimity are qualified to undertake any part. States and empires are founded on courage and magnanimity, and depend on it for their preservation. How carefully,

then, should youths, whom birth or opulence predestine to rule their country at home, or to stand forth its champions abroad, be trained up in the constant theory of noble sentiments, and taught to reduce them to practice on those happy occasions, when pleasure and self-triumph concur in forwarding their exertion !

LET-

L E T T E R V I I I .

O N

T E M P E R A N C E A N D S O B R I E T Y .

DA I L Y observation will afford you continual proof, that a regular course of living, like wholesome laws and regulations in a commonwealth, is the only infallible means of giving strength and permanency to the constitution of both body and mind.

S O B R I E T Y and temperance, like venerable families, whose worth and services to the public are recorded in the grateful acknowledgment of men, seem, by their necessity and importance, to have claimed more notice and praise than any of those qualifications whose peculiar intent is to perfect and preserve our personal faculties.

L I K E

LIKE sovereigns eager to reward the merit of useful and deserving subjects, we are lavish in the titles we bestow on sobriety and temperance. Well indeed may we stile them, the purest fountain of health, the source and promoter of cheerfulness and joy, and the support of all internal and external accomplishments; since they alone can lengthen youth, invigorate manhood, comfort age, and, in short, animate life throughout its whole progress.

LIKE want of cementing materials in architecture, their absence is an essential detriment to the human fabric, in which nothing can be sound and lasting without them.

In the same proportion as they are the cherishers of intellectual and moral qualities, and the co-operators in all laudable actions, their enemies are the capital enemies of

obstructors to every virtue, and the foster-fires of all depravation.

TEMPERANCE is one of those amiable endowments that pleases all to the cost of none, and insures to the possessor a capacity to acquire a multitude of other valuable qualifications.

TEMPERANCE well understood is the highest refinement of luxury : by never cloying us, it always keeps our palate on its appetite, and our desires in play; and, like expectation, is itself equal to the pleasure of enjoyment.

NATURE is not prone to intemperance. Imagination, heated by the contagion of example, is guilty of drawing us into excesses, much oftener than depravity of taste.

WHEN we reflect on the consequences of intemperance, 'tis strange that we should, from mere complaisance, so often submit
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to prejudice ourselves, when no future benefit, or even present pleasure, can be pleaded as a motive. Nothing can more evidently and forcibly demonstrate the power of custom ; and that there is an inherent pliancy in our make, that will not suffer us to be unlike those whom we frequent.

For this reason, the only certificate of sobriety is to avoid, with abhorrence and detestation, those who have addicted themselves to habitual revelry.

MANY a one would have lived soberly all the days of his life, but for having unfortunately been intimate with only one of this Bacchanalian cast.

He that is once initiated into this tribe, may be looked upon as a man in a consumption ; from whence seldom any body recovers.

THE preservation of peace in domestic society, and that of interior serenity within ourselves, the two grand points to which human wisdom should steer, are absolute strangers to that class of mortals : we are more surprized to hear of their meeting peaceably, than of their quarrels and disturbances.

THE principal pleasure of life consists in a uniform tenour of content and satisfaction, neither swelling to extravagance and excess, nor falling away to apathy and indolence : but persons of this sort are usually either inflated with madness, or sunk in stupidity.

INTEMPERANCE is soonest punished, of all irregularities : its effects are commonly at no great distance from their cause : youth quickly dwindles into age, by the rapid enervation of the bodily frame, and the speedy decay of the mind.

THE rewards of sobriety, on the contrary, are of an equal duration with our existence ; and the sooner they begin, the longer they last.

THE fruits of sobriety are not only remarkable in the strength and vigour of body that keep company even with years, but are still more minutely conspicuous in the vivacity of soul that enlivens the exertion of our faculties while young, and the genial serenity that emulates the cheerfulness of youth in our latter date.

ALL exterior qualifications and all interior excellence depend on temperance, like children on parents, for their birth and nourishment.

As they flow from the just regulation of body and mind, when these are disordered, or by repeated shocks falling to ruin, they must of course be necessarily destroyed ; or, which is much worse, are

liable to the most fatal perversion : in the same manner as the unfortunate progeny of the iniquitous are either consigned to neglect and misery ; or, which is still more woeful, are tutored in all the criminal arts of perdition.

WITHOUT sobriety courage degenerates into ferocity, and proves more detrimental to itself and others, than the basest cowardice, and the most abject demeanour.

ACTIVITY, which, while under the patronage of discretion, moves with security and success ; when unbridled by intemperance runs wild, and is the more dangerous in proportion to its owner's aversion to indolence.

WIT and liveliness, the embellishers of society, whenever they break loose from the bonds of decency and decorum, become the most pernicious nuisance, and often occasion more mischief in one hour than a whole life of dullness could perpetrate.

WHILE we abstain from intemperance, we cheerfully pursue the course of our vocation: labour sits lightly upon us, and we begrudge not to submit patiently, and without repinement, to the condition which our destiny has assigned to us. In other words, we remain capable of enjoying that portion of happiness which falls to the lot of every human being.

BUT as soon as we renounce the paths of sobriety, a fatal change is gradually operated: we forget the duties of our calling; our imaginations are elevated above the level of our circumstances; we fret at our situation, and envy that of others. As judgement and reflection have no seat in our councils, all is transacted according to the whim of the day; and we go on, entangling ourselves in difficulties and distresses, till we sink into irretrievable ruin.

INTEMPERANCE, by setting all the passions at liberty, breaks down all the fences of moderation and honesty; like
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an army that mutinies through relaxation of discipline, and want of abilities in the commanders, every irregular appetite is indulged, every evil habit predominates, and confusion inhabits wherever we go.

As where intemperance dwells no safety can reside, the maxim of self-defence and preservation expels us from the presence of our acquaintance; like those sad objects in whom extinction of reason has kindled a dreadful propensity to all manner of outrageousness.

COMMISERATION and pity, being only the lawful claim of the unhappy, are no more due to those who plunge into the horrors of intemperance, than to a man who rushes upon destruction from wantonness and bravado.

As such a suicide intails contempt on its perpetrator, execration is what these artificers of their own wretchedness have a right to expect, not only from others but
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but also from themselves; when want of opportunities or means to banish consideration obtrudes upon them a lucid interval. Like a severe judge, it puts the sword of justice into their hands, and forces them to become their own executioners.

IN the midst of their infamy, as if nature had ordained that they should pronounce their own condemnation, 'tis common to hear them zealously reprehend in others, that which their very guilt prevents them, through the deprivation of sensibility, from perceiving in themselves.

SUCH is the fatal tendency of this abominable vice, that it seldom fails to produce others: like the head of a gang of malefactors, it is perpetually employed in forming associates.

IF it does not assault the traveller on the road, nor break open doors in search of spoil and plunder, yet it unloads the heart, and divulges your secrets

those of your familiars and acquaintance. Like a ferocious animal, whose untractable nature no arts can tame, and whose very play is dangerous to unwary caressers; it often, without design, wounds the peace of families, blasts the character of persons who might have lived unstained but for your indiscretion; sets friends at variance; renders enmity irreconcilable; and breeds suspicions, jealousies, and hatred, where the most cordial union had before subsisted,

SUCH are the sports and pastimes of men addicted to intemperance. They seldom fail to employ that remnant of capacity to discourse which unluckily survives the death of reason, in topics which repentance vainly strives to obliterate.

BUT were intemperance to debar itself the perpetration of mischiefs abroad, it commits enough at home, by the wants, miseries, and distresses, endless to enumerate,

rate, which, like ruffians, accompany this merciless dealer of destruction.

INTEMPERANCE, in this respect, is often like a tyrant, who lives in peace with his neighbours, and confines his cruelty and oppression within the circle of his own dominions.

No condition can secure intemperance from punishment. Present affluence, like a screen, frequently serves but to hide the prospect of approaching ruin.

As care is inseparably requisite, not only to amass, but also to preserve what has been obtained, that fundamental support of opulence giving way, the whole pile must needs totter and shake, and at last tumble to the ground.

HENCE it is we daily witness the desolation of families, whose wealth, although considerable, was not proof against the imperceptible ways and means of

found to undermine the feeble and crazy devotees to intemperance: Their weak and impotent mind, assaulted through those breaches of constitution that have impaired their judgement and reason, like a dismantled town, lies open to the depredations of any enemy.

BUT if, instead of riches, fate has stationed you on the field of toil; should intemperance, like a false friend by whose instigations real ones are discarded, turn industry and labour out of your dwelling; then woe to the woman who bears your name, and to the children who call you father,

A MAN whose name is fixed on the list of intemperance, is like one against whom a statute of bankruptcy has been issued; his character remains doubtful ever after,

TRUST and confidence fly from want of sobriety, as travellers from a bad inn, with a resolution never to return.

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LIKE a house of evil fame, which renders its tenants infamous, intemperance makes its votaries utterly contemptible. Respect and esteem, like visitors ill used, bid them an everlasting adieu; and should they (through a wonderful change) reform their conduct, the severe world treats them like repenting prostitutes, and gives no credit to the alteration.

THERE is not in the whole circle of vices, one whose commencements are seemingly more innocent: they almost coincide with, and are hardly distinguishable from, the convenient and necessary comforts of nurture and refreshment: for which reason we should stand more circumspectly upon our guard, and give admission to no excesses, whatever denomination they may assume, whether of transient indulgence, good-fellowship, festivity, or any other. They only serve to deceive us in the same manner as false colours, which freebooters hang out at sea in order to decoy the unsuspecting,

A SAD concomitant of intemperance is its longevity. Where it once unfortunately fixes, like plants ingrafted on the body of a tree, it takes root, and incorporates with our existence until its final dissolution. When we are past the commission of all other bodily sins, nature still retains the unhappy capacity of degrading itself with this shameful one. To its own peculiar curse of incorrigibility, it adds the more fatal and deplorable one of conferring strength and permanency upon every criminal habit we have contracted : like the pernicious favourite of a deluded monarch, who, not content with gratifying his own profligate disposition, awakens and encourages his master's evil inclinations, and becomes a firebrand of iniquity and mischief to the whole state.

LET.

LETTER IX.

ON

PROPRIETY OF BEHAVIOUR.

ATENTION to the daily transactions of society will convince you, that personal deportment always decides of the attachment or dislike, of the esteem or slight, which individuals entertain for each other.

MANKIND judge by appearances, from a very obvious and sufficient reason; which is, that people generally are what they appear.

It is difficult, not to say impracticable, to preserve long an assumed and feigned character. Nature is ever recalling us to our original reality; and art grows tired
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at last with working against the grain :
like a disappointed husbandman, who re-
fuses to waste his labour in a stubborn soil.

'Tis not in the human disposition to
bear with so heavy a burden, as that of
perpetual constraint and artifice ; which,
like clothes that fit us not, must fit very
uneasy.

HE that proposes to recommend himself
by propriety of behaviour, must study to
act his own part ; and to avoid the affec-
tation that follows, from undertaking one
which is designed for another.

AFFECTATION is a great cheat, and al-
ways betrays those who employ him.

WE cannot pay ourselves a worse com-
pliment than by affectation ; 'tis acknow-
ledging that we ought to be what we are
not.

AFFECTATION, like a mask, may con-
ceal ;

ceal; but is still known to be a false face.

PEOPLE hate affectation more than any other failing; because it is used to hide all the others, in order to give us an air of perfection and superiority that we have no right to wear.

'TIS wrong to imagine that we are beloved for having no failings at all: a few of them are necessary, to bring us to the level of other men, who would otherwise repay our faultlessness with more envy than admiration.

WE may observe, that those characters in novels and romances that are the most perfect, afford us the least pleasure, and claim the least of our favour and attention: they are too far removed from the condition of humanity: we feel no interest for persons who have so few concerns & the frailties that are common to us all.

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which, by approximating us, obviate the dissatisfaction arising from too superior merit.

THE great art of behaviour is to excel others without appearing to endeavour it : this produces the same effect as liberality in a wealthy man, who makes no parade of his riches ; we gain respect without envy.

THE native sense of equity is so profoundly rooted in our mind, that we cannot help paying interior acknowledgment of superiority to those who deserve it.

BUT, as if it were ordained that none should arrogate the execution of justice in his own behalf, the moment we take upon us to assert our own qualifications, we forfeit the right of receiving the benefit of that assertion from others.

MEN are all jealous of their respective privileges : if we have the happiness
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of possessing great talents and qualifications, others have the bestowing of laurels and praises : like a sovereign, who, tho' unequal in personal worth to the subject to whom he adjudges rewards, enjoys the sole prerogative of conferring them.

DIFFIDENCE and modesty, while sincere and unaffected, are the most engaging recommendations to merit. Modesty represses that needless effervescency of spirit, which is always prompting us to be foremost; and diffidence prevents the tyrannical overbearing of conceit.

WHEN merit comes thus attended, it makes, as it were, a triumphal entry into our heart. We then approach it as we would a king who tempers his majesty and grandeur with mildness and affability.

THE weight of superior merit is not so heavy as it seems, when we are under no obligations of paying the invidious

ostentation exacts, by making us too sensible of our inferiority.

CONDESCENSION to the level of inferiors is like a feast given by a great man to his tenants : 'tis in both cases an invitation to be benefited at free cost.

LET us never point out that peculiar species of merit which fancy has adopted as our indisputable property : people never doubt a person's excellence in any particular quality, so much as when he hints his good opinion of himself in that respect.

THE reason is, that by too fatal an experience, we are all convinced of the blindness of self-judgment.

THE method of winning assent, is less by an eloquent display of reasoning and argumentation, than by a dubitancy (if one may so express it) in what one proposes :

poses : the first, from its very nature, anticipates the decision of others by publishing our own ; while the second obligingly gives room for precedence to that of others ; and often secures their concurrence on that very account.

THIS method banishes that air of authority and presumption which attends positive assertions, however supported by truth and good sense, and leaves the liberty of dissenting ; which, though a man will not take, yet he will ever be displeased not to have.

GENTLENESS of behaviour and smoothness of expression will always gain some share of persuasion and favour, by that shew of respect and deference which captivates even the most averse to our designs ; while, on the contrary, strength of thought and powerfulness of language, divested of affability, like the hostile preparations of an enemy, set men upon

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guard, and induce them, as it were, to repel force with force.

DECENCY of personal behaviour is the eloquence of the body, as a happiness of thoughts and words is that of the mind.

DECENCY proceeds from discernment and judiciousness of thinking.

IT requires more discrimination than falls to the lot of shallow people, to behave with justness and propriety.

THESE are the constituents of true taste, which is the knowledge of the peculiarities and appurtenances of place, time, and persons.

TASTE, in this instance, is the heraldry of the mind : it regulates the mode of our behaviour, suitably to the difference of characters and tempers, and the various circumstances of things : in the same manner

ner as the other is conversant in the appropriation of exterior honours to each individual, according to the rank he holds in society.

TASTE, in social intercourse, is the result of a man's consideration what best befits himself, and is due to others.

YOUTH and age have their different rules of behaving, as well as the higher and lower conditions in life; and the incroachment on either department subjects the transgressor equally to ridicule,

YET what more frequent than to see persons, whom Nature meant to render venerable by gravity, wantonly running after the levities of their former years!

GRAVITY is a badge of distinction and respect, which age alone impowers men to assume, without incurring the censur

inconsistency and affectation : like veterans in an army, whose experience and services intitle them to wear some exterior token of merit.

THE pursuit of juvenilities in a man whose date of life should class him above them, is like a noble personage's degrading himself by associating with the dregs of the populace.

THE contrast is not less disagreeable, when young men give themselves airs of self-sufficiency and knowledge of things to which their years can afford no pretence. 'Tis like usurping an estate to which the world knows we have no right.

NOTHING more usually contributes to the exclusion from the society of both the old and the young, than that groundless arrogation of premature science in worldly affairs.

ELDERLY

ELDERLY men have a natural privilege to claim a better insight into things than the young ; and will consequently treat an attempt to equality in these matters, as impertinence and presumption.

YOUNG men, on the other hand, will not patiently suffer their coevals to pretend to more judgement and penetration than themselves.

ONE of the most common errors we fall into in our ordinary behaviour, is not so much the valuing ourselves on those qualifications we have, as on those we have not : 'tis the same as if a man, after feeding his imagination with vain prospects of opulence, should actually think he were become rich.

THIS error leads into numberless others : the more we endeavour to excel, the less we succeed : as those who travel their own road, are liable to perpetu-
viations.

HENCE let us, like a general who reviews his forces before battle, make an exact estimation of our abilities, ere we trust ourselves to their exertion.

'TIS a great knowledge to know how far we can depend on ourselves. The reason we generally are so ignorant in this respect is, that a self-examination hurts our pride: like men in business whose affairs are in such disorder as not to brook an inspection.

WHILE we adhere to the management of our own proper talents, 'tis like an army's engaging on the ground its leaders have chosen; but to over-rate them, is like an officer's exceeding his orders.

THE capacity of each individual, is a commission received from nature; which he is fully to execute; but never to attempt to go beyond it.

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THIS commission is ever to be present to our mind, as a lesson we can never too much study to understand; since prosperity or adversity flow from our remissness or application.

To mistake our capacity, by undertaking what was never its destination to perform, is the daily source of most miscarriages. 'Tis like going to war with mechanic utensils instead of military weapons, or like working with tools of which we have not learned the use.

THIS frequent misunderstanding of ourself is derived from that immoderation of soul, which, by grasping at all things, compasses fairly none. Not content with that share of capacity we are really endowed with, we aim at universality; as an avaricious trader, unsatisfied with lawful gains, ventures beyond the bounds by which the extent of his commerce is limited.

BUT as confiscation of his effects is the consequence of his temerity, in the same manner our rash endeavours to shine in all things, suggested by jealousy and impatience at the pre-eminency of others, usually terminate in our shame and humiliation.

THE cause of all this mischief is, that we do not set a due value on the happiness of being compleat and perfect in any one attainment ; and yet if we are at the pains to compare the separate merit of all who have been remarkably eminent, we shall find that few, very few, were ever truly such in more than one single talent.

PERFECTION is a tree with many branches ; every one of which, like a sprig of laurel, sufficiently decorates the possessor.

WE need not repine at the endowments of others : Nature is an impartial parent,
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and has made no such unequal distribution of power, as to enable any favourite son to aspire at universal supremacy throughout every province and department of genius.

HOWEVER great our abilities may be, moderation is the only charm that secures them from malevolence, and renders their splendour supportable.

THE riches of the mind, like exterior wealth, are not to be displayed, but on occasions of necessity and real use.

WE should always strive to make our minds, as well as our persons, keep company with those we associate with; and to go, as it were, hand in hand.

LET us never be earnest in taking the lead in conversation. People hate to follow where they have not chosen their conductors; and to presume on the solid
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expertness of our judgement, is a tacit undervaluing that of others.

THERE is nothing of which we are more jealous than of our judgement. The flights of imagination, the fallies of wit, the sprightliness of humour we are willing to give up to the claim of others; but we cannot bear that we should be denied to judge of imagination, wit, and humour. These three, though pleasing, are not necessary requisites: but we all look upon judgement as a qualification indispensable in what is deemed a man of sense; and who will consent to be thought otherwise?

THE supreme art of conversation is rather to be civil and pliant, than smart and pleasant. We are all taken with civility; but pleasantry, like sauces, requires so much nicety that too much or too little seasoning is generally the case.

WHEN a man unasked, and of his own accord, engrosses the attention of company,

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ny, and would appear more entertaining than others, he makes, as it were, a silent agreement to realise his pretensions; or, if he should fail, to undergo their slight and derision, as a chastisement of his presumption.

THE scale of disapprobation or applause is so easily turned against us, by the native propensity of men to under-rate what is not their own, that we should be very cautious in subjecting ourselves to the sentence and opinion of others; which is something like a city's surrendering at discretion.

OF all things, we should beware of bringing into company any secret conviction that we are at the top of it: 'twill never lurk so deep, but a discovery will be made: the consequence will be, an unanimous trial to spy out our weak sides; and it were surprising if, so beset, we should be able to conceal them. **Th**is is just like that of an ambitious

whose designs, once known, immediately occasion a confederacy to suppress him.

MILDNESS and placidity are the patrons, under whose auspicious influence we meet with a favourable reception every-where.

THE manifestation of good-nature and suavity of temper is what most effectually prepossesses affection and benevolence. It indicates the worthiness of the soul, as a florid look is the sign of a healthy constitution.

AN air of benignity is the good-breeding of the mind : it denotes its participation with the body's exterior deportment, and gives spirit and meaning to the customary forms of civility.

A KIND and affable countenance pleases beyond beauty in woman, or comeliness in man ; because it is the image of those qualities that are most acceptable to mankind ;

kind, a humane heart, and an obliging disposition : like the picture of a friend, we view it with complacency, for the sake of him whom it represents.

THE impression made by genius, wit, knowledge, and learning, is that of surprize and admiration : but as friendship is a tribute which interior moral excellence has the sole right of exacting, those who are well read in human nature will always court acceptance and esteem rather, by an appearance of goodness, than by a parade of capacity.

ONE of the most important precepts relating to our behaviour in society, is to repress every emotion, and, if possible, to eradicate every seed of envy, by frankly allowing to every one that degree of merit he is justly intitled to : we thereby effectually secure the acknowledgement of our own ; as the due fulfilling of treaties by a nation empowers it to challenge, with

priety, a reciprocation of honour and fidelity from others.

To persons of superior worth and delicate feeling, nothing is more satisfactory and endearing than a judicious commendation. On this account, let us never be sparing of our praises, when we can confer them with candour and truth. As much as flattery disgraces, so much is praise becoming, when dictated by sincerity, and flowing from the effusion of an undissimulating heart.

FLATTERY is like the homage paid by disloyal subjects to an usurper; of the falsehood of which the receiver must be conscious. But praise truly deserved, is like the payment of legal demands: we take it without blushing. As punctuality in the discharge of debts encourages further credit, the bestowing of merited encomiums promotes the exertion of those virtues, of which they are the salary and recompence.

L E T-

LETTER X.

ON

FORETHOUGHT AND REFLECTION.

INURE yourself betimes to habits of wariness and deliberation: they are like scouts in war, who precede an army for its preservation against any sudden attack.

HURRY and precipitation with great abilities, are like bad officers with good troops, a perpetual scene of mutual embarrassment and confusion.

COOLNESS of thought and sedateness of reflection are the council of state of the mind: they take cognizance of all our designs while yet in embryo, and digest and prepare them for action.

CIRCUMSPECTION, like some warlike implements, is both offensive and defensive. In moderate capacities, it is a shield of defence, and, like an intrenchment, serves to protect us against superior forces : in eminent ones, it is like reconnoitring the enemy, and putting on armour before we go to battle.

As wit and vivacity often run us into danger, when they take the start of reflection, the combination of all three is necessary to add security to splendor. While the latter is wanting, 'tis like the separation of a powerful ally, whose importance alone supported the common cause.

WIT and vivacity unguarded, are like soldiers who venture on some desperate enterprise without a leader.

By indulging an impetuous vein of liveliness, we seldom shine but to our own cost ; as imagination, like a quicker-paced com-

companion, usually leaves judgement far behind.

EAGERNESS for admiration is the general failing that precipitates the display of our abilities : but when this comes unaccompanied with esteem, like Pyrrhus's victories over the Romans, it hurts our cause much more than it enhances our reputation.

By the same rule that generosity alone can render opulence respectable, people may admire our abilities ; but only the proper management of them procures esteem.

A THOUGHTFUL silent person is less displeasing, even in his taciturnity, than one of a lively disposition, whose starts and flashes are not managed with propriety : the former, if unable to excite pleasure, will not create impatience : but the brilliancy of the latter, like the sun in a rainy day, shews itself siently, and to no purpose,

WIT becomes disgusting, either through unseasonableness or superabundance, as ornaments in architecture by their too great number, or injudicious disposition.

THE art of bringing reflection home, distinguishes the man of sense and conduct from the mere wit and genius : the latter's intellectual powers, though much the superior, are too deeply involved in general speculations to give attention to those particular occurrences, which ought to determine the exercise or suspension of his talents.

THE truth is, that too great a dedication of our thoughts to theory, generally prevents our application of them to practice ; and inspires such an immoderate desire of appearing witty and knowing, that all propriety of time, place, and persons, is utterly forgotten.

WIT without reflection is like beauty without modesty, pernicious to the owner.

THE

FORETHOUGHT AND REFLECTION. 133

THE company of wits is courted ; but we prefer the intimacy of a man of thoughtfulness and reflection. The most we can promise ourselves from the former, is diversion and merriment ; but we depend on the latter for solid substantial services. The first is like sunshine without rain, pleasant but unprofitable : the second, like a moist but fertile climate, which, tho' cloudy and less enlivening, yet repays the dweller with plenty.

FORETHOUGHT leads, as it were, the van of our enterprizes ; and, like pioneers in a siege, forwards our approaches to success, by clearing the way before us.

No instance appears on record, that any capital error was ever committed where the plan was laid, and the measures were taken, in consequence of due deliberation.

THERE is scarce any sort of
but may be overcome, or dimi

dint of consideration : without it, the minutest obstacle is able to retard us. Cæsar could build a bridge over the Rhine ; but a small rivulet can impede the march of an army for want of a pontoon.

MISTAKES in life are like false steps in walking, mostly owing to hastiness and precipitancy.

OUR frequent errors proceed much less from defect of capacity, than impetuosity of passion ; the impatience of Nature to obtain its desire, spurring us on to compass the end, ere we have provided ourselves with the means.

A MIND under the guidance of reflection, is like a steed well managed ; whose motions, while obedient to the bridle, are full of order and comeliness.

THE very appearance of reflection enables us to make a figure in conversation.
'Tis

'Tis to the mind what decency of apparel is to the body ; it raises an opinion of our capacity, as the other prepossesses in favour of our circumstances.

AN air of forethought is the livery of good-sense ; with which even folly may sometimes deceive the eyes of reason.

BUT this very deception proves the greatness of its use and efficacy ; and that the wearing of it is necessary to gain respect, as a fashionable dress is requisite to secure admittance into polite company.

THE attention which is commanded by a mere outside of thinking and circumspection, is an earnest of the intrinsic value of what it represents ; in the same manner as the civilities we shew to one whom we mistake for another, are an argument how much we prize the person himself.

DELIBERATENESS and reserve always merit, and always meet with some degree of success.

If they do not carry the point in agitation, they still intitle us to security, by not venturing beyond our strength; which alone is a considerable advantage.

THEY are the first step towards winning approbation, by that calmness and serenity which are their peculiar attendants. These convey a favourable impression of the mind, as reputable persons vouch for the character of those whom they accompany.

WE entertain a higher notion of the dexterity of an artist, whom time and experience may have improved, than of one who wants those advantages. By the same rule we pay more deference to what flows with a seemingness of preparation, than to what is hurried forth by starts and sallies, without an apparent sufficiency of

leisure to ponder on what is to be delivered.

As the generality of men do not immediately perceive the justice or demerits of a cause; a hasty determination takes the scale of judgment out of their hands. While it insultingly sets our penetration above theirs, it invades their privilege of thinking, by anticipating it; and often robs us of the satisfaction we should have received in their assenting to our opinion, by preventing their due examination of the subject in question.

By this arrogant celerity in pronouncing our own judgments, we virtually refuse the assistance and co-operation of other people's thoughts. 'Tis like a proud man who is above accepting relief in his necessities.

On the contrary, by repressing this
 generous forwardness, we enter into
 parts

partnership of thinking, and bid fairer, by this conjunction of mental powers, to speak judiciously ; as the combination of several corps contributes to form the strength of an army, and enable it to proceed to action.

A PRECIPITATE preclusion of other people's judgments, in order to publish our own, is aiming at a monopoly of sense and penetration ; to which we have no more right in the intellectual system, than foretellers in the commercial one.

'Tis the same presumption in one person affectedly to antecede others in the manifestation of his own thoughts, as it would be in the commander of a small detachment to venture an engagement without waiting for the main body.

THE laws of good-breeding are never observed with truth and perfection, till we are disengaged from selfish prepossessions,

sions, and convinced that our intellectual wants are only to be supplied by the benefit of society. But this peremptory preference of our own ideas is an absolute disdain to associate our capacity with that of others; and is no less abusive and insolent, than if a man should, without assigning any reason, challenge the precedence in all companies.

Nothing gains ascendancy sooner than condescension, chiefly of a superior capacity to an inferior one. 'Tis a compliment to our vanity which we repay in proportion as we feel how little we are able to pretend to an equality.

By shewing a due attention to what is transacting in the minds of others, we not only treat them with civility, but indirectly avail ourselves of their parts, to pave the way for a safer use of our own, and to give them a convenient measure of preparation.

A DUE space of premeditation on the notions of others, ushers in our own thoughts with weight and dignity : it removes that suspicion of inconsideration and levity, which always attend our inattention to their ideas.

BUT the prime argument to enforce a previous inspection into the minds of others, is, that the securest judgments are generally formed out of the coalition of divers opinions; as the best governments from the judicious mixture of the several kinds.

THIS impartial arrangement and mutual adoption of our various notions, exclusive of its utility in the investigation of truth, is like the right observance of time in music. It contributes to the harmony and good intelligence of individuals. The only road to union and reciprocal toleration, is by admitting every one to make the most of his capacity. Discussions in private society should be carried on like the free and involuntary

compulsive deliberations of a well-regulated Commonwealth, where every member enjoys the liberty of his vote, and, content with that just and natural privilege, acquiesces in the decision resulting from the several opinions delivered on the subject in debate.

To utter one's sentiments without some visible pause for the exertion of thought, subjects them very justly to a severe scrutiny; for which reason it is always advisable to leave a proper space of silence between a question and answer: this done unaffectedly, prepossesses the audience in our favour.

As much honour is obtained by hesitation in doubtful cases, as by a speedy determination, however just and apposite. A slow and circumspectful answer we readily attribute to a calm examination of the matter proposed, and pay more deference to it accordingly; while, on the
con-

contrary, a person of vivacity, who speaks readily to the point in agitation, is often mistrusted from his very diligence in answering ; the difficulty of the subject requiring, in our apprehension, more weighing and consideration than he has used.

PEOPLE whose intellects are all life and penetration, are naturally quick at expression, and may indubitably form as sure a judgment as those who are less forward ; but still, unfortunately for the cause they maintain, they seem by their hastiness to speak at a venture : while, as it is in reality accompanied with more fecundity, a deliberate and wary method of speaking carries with it a greater appearance and probability of thinking and forecast.

LET.

L E T T E R X I.

HOW TO JUDGE OF MANKIND.

WHEN we survey the tempers and inclinations of men, we are too apt to form our opinion of individuals according to what they say or do with least premeditation.

BUT this rule is far from being infallible : it often happens that persons who were primitively under the influence of some vice or failing, although they may have conquered it, yet are not wholly able to prevent its rebellious motions ; which, like male-contents in a state, can never be intirely eradicated.

THE native appetite, like an ill-defeated enemy, still keeps the field : though we may restrain its bad consequences, we must

must, however, expect to wage a perpetual war with it. Hence it falls out that when we are off our guard, it breaks in upon us, and shews how difficult it is totally to suppress what is bred, as it were, in the very core of our nature.

THE only justifiable method of judging men is from their actions : yet even here we are liable to infinite errors. As the actions of men derive their moral goodness from their motives, most excellent effects may frequently be produced by very bad causes.

THE whole tenour of a man's conduct must be taken into contemplation, in order to pronounce a just verdict upon him. When we see the practice of virtue continued through every act and scene of his life, it were the highest injustice to deny such a character the appellation of good and virtuous : dissimulation and falsehood can last but a while ; and it were
absurd

absurd that a man should be thought capable of acting always the part of virtue, without being really virtuous.

WE are not to frame our notions of any one from broken detached pieces of his behaviour in particular instances; as all men have their days of inconsistency, and the best are not always good, nor the worst always bad.

To know a man thoroughly, 'tis not enough to be conversant with him in those matters that result from his profession and general way of living: we ought also to have the opportunity of examining his privacy; for there only men dare to divest themselves of those exteriorities, which they are so careful to put on in the face of the world.

WHEN the eye of the public is no longer upon us, we naturally remit of our shrewdness and circumspection; which,
L like

like shackles, fit cumbersome even on those who are most used to them.

MEN are in this respect like actors ; who are always glad to reassume their own, however they are able to shine and command applause in a fictitious, character.

FORMALITIES are to our actions what dress is to our bodies ; they cover and conceal all blemishes and defects.

As we cannot enjoy a perfect and complete view of a person's corporeal beauty or deformity till the apparel is thrown off, we never acquire a true knowledge of another's interiority, but in those hours of relaxation that permit him to cast off artifice, and return to the simplicity of pure nature.

THERE is in the worthiest human compositions, such a mixture of things respectable, and of others as deserving of censure,
that

that when we become acquainted with the reality of some people, 'tis with the utmost difficulty we can make their merit preponderate in their favour: we are forced to summon all our equity, to prevent us from undervaluing them, on account of the disgust we receive from the multiplicity of their imperfections.

'Tis generally with persons of superior worth, that foibles of the most disagreeable sort are found; as if Nature delighted in pulling down with one hand, what she has been erecting with the other.

HENCE it is that those to whom we grant the title of Men of Abilities, are commonly shy of exposing themselves to the fullness of domestic inspection; from the consciousness that they risk the losing of that reputation in private, which they have obtained in public.

MEN of this cast are usually of more utility to the world in general, than agree-

able to their friends in particular : we reap more benefit from their solitude than from their society.

OF all characters, none are more desirable for the improvement of social enjoyments, than those whose knowledge of active life is connected with an observing inquisitive disposition, cultivated by study and reading.

WHEN such men open their lips, it is a great misfortune they should suffer interruption from the numerous upstarts and pretenders to abilities that infest society. By paying due attention to the discourse of a few such persons, more of the world is learned, and we are better enabled to judge of mankind, than by the limited experience that falls to the share of many others.

CONVERSATION is the criterion of almost every man's intellectual merit. Though a sensible person may trespass with his tongue, either by running into error, or by dwelling

HOW TO JUDGE OF MANKIND. 149

ling on subjects too trite and insignificant; yet as in general his thoughts are just, and his matter well chosen, he will also express himself with judiciousness at least, if not with elegance.

IN our judgments of men, we are too prone to construe every thing according to our own feelings, and to imagine that others are liable to be affected by the same causes, and in a similar manner with ourselves. Hence it is that we are so often dissatisfied with others, and they with us.

As every one has his peculiarities of taste and fancy, 'tis only by scrutinizing them that we discover the proprietor's real disposition: they not only influence both the virtues and vices of men, but are often the result of them.

WHEN we propose acquiring the friendship or good-will of another, we have our aim, by using those methods too general system of prudence can be followed; without consi-

rules adopted in theory are liable to perpetual exceptions, when reduced to practice.

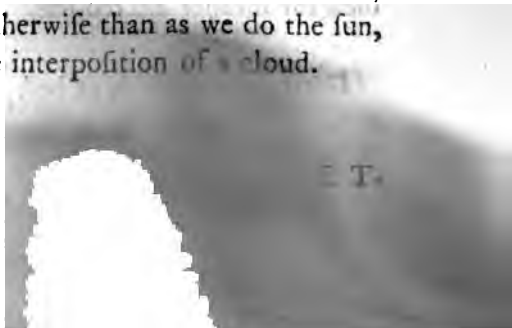
EVERY individual is actuated by his own particular motives ; like various machineries by their secret springs. As by learning the construction of these, we find in what manner they are to be used, so by the careful observation of a man's native bent and propensity, we are taught the method of gaining an ascendancy over him.

THIS insight of others is acquired by uniting with their ideas and pursuits. Pliancy is a key that unlocks the inmost recesses of a man's heart : by falling into the track of his occupations or amusements, you travel, as it were, side by side ; and have an opportunity, by perceiving whither his inclination leads him, to humour and act in conformity with it. This is the only sure road to success, when amity and favour is our final design.

THE

THE great stumbling-block to rectitude of judgment, is jealousy; from which hardly any human being is totally exempt. It is perpetually employed in discovering imperfections, and diminishing good qualities. As the selfishness of mankind is such, that they are afraid of meeting with aught more excellent than is in their own possession, they industriously endeavour to represent things in a light that will not prove unfavourable to their vanity. Where facts are too glaring to be denied, they are careful to qualify them in such a manner, that although truth is not absolutely suppressed, yet 'tis darkened, and not suffered to appear in its due lustre.

THUS it is with transcendent worth. Beings of an inferior class cannot bear its radiancy; and are unable and averse to behold it otherwise than as we do the sun, through the interposition of a cloud.



LETTER XII,

ON

DISSIMULATION.

AS diffimulation is oftener used to hide a bad than a good cause, our character will certainly become questionable, if we frequently practise it ; for we only dissemble through fear or shame.

It were paying too great a compliment to diffimulation to give it a name among the virtues. 'Tis, with respect to them, what a privy door is to the principal gate of a palace ; the passage through which is public and honourable, while the other is used for meaner intercourse.

DISSIMULATION is at best but a shift ;
as we never stoop to it but for want of
better

better expedients : we follow it as those do a bye way, who dare not be seen upon the open road.

THOUGH the depravity of men has dignified dissimulation with some degree of wisdom, yet there is undoubtedly more substantial ability proved in preventing the necessity of recurring to its assistance, than in all the skill and address that are employed in the management of it : as exquisite generalship is shewn much more by overcoming the enemy without fighting, than by hazarding the chance of battle.

A MAN conversant in dissimulation proves his barrenness of prudence. This last acts upon the square, and is not afraid of inspection : but the man who dissembles has only the chance of not being discovered.

IF we look into the precedents of tient and modern worthies, we shall none of any eminence embracing

out reluctance ; and however necessitated in their affairs, ever complaining of its weight on their minds, and shaking it off whenever they could accomplish their ends without its intervention,

To put on a face of frankness, and assume an undesigning air, in order to hide a complication of artifice, cannot tally with an upright and ingenuous disposition. He that can, without feeling uneasiness, act so untrue a part, has certainly the seeds of falsehood deeply implanted in his heart.

LET us not, however, confound internal circumspectfulness with dissimulation. The first has a natural right to antecede our actions, as it acts purely on the defensive, and is a safeguard and protection to ourselves, without harbouring any views inconsistent with the welfare and prosperity of others : but the second is founded on a determination to mislead and ensnare. It deals in imposition and deceit ; its tendency

dency is to circumvent others ; and all its motions are hostile and offensive.

Nothing is more repugnant to, and destructive of, the spirit of honour and manliness, than to accustom one's self to wear a countenance different from that, which one's purposes would naturally inspire : it hurts the soul, in the same proportion as the long practice of a distorted position detriments the body by misshaping it.

'Tis a great misfortune ever to have recourse to subterfuge and evasion : but 'tis a much greater to arrive at skilfulness and dexterity in so base an art. While it disgraces the understanding, it seldom fails to effect, if not a total corruption of the heart, at least a considerable diminution of its worth and dignity. In spite of the encomiums bestowed on it by shallow minds, it entitles the possessor to no better an appellation than that of an adept in the mystery of deception.

HONOUR.

HONOUR and truth are both of that delicate texture, that the least touch wounds them. Though to dissemble, on some unhappy occasions, may be requisite, in order to obviate an heavy calamity ; yet 'tis only committing a lesser evil, to save the commission of a greater. 'Tis not without sorrow and remorse, that strict honesty accepts the assistance of artifice to extricate itself from so cruel a dilemma : like a virtuous monarch who is reduced, by the fatal necessity of the times, to employ undeserving subjects.

LET-

LETTER XIII.

ON

DISCRETION.

KNOWLEDGE and parts may acquire admiration and a name; but discretion only can obtain and secure, what is far more eligible, interest, credit, and respect.

KNOWLEDGE is the result of mere study; but discretion is the fruit of judgement and observation; which are the two pillars on which men chuse to rest the edifice of hope and confidence. .

WITH all the learning that may be collected by the application of a whole life, a man is often deemed unfit for a trust of consequence: while discretion, without affect,

158 MAXIMS AND REFLECTIONS ON

affecting any parade, appears on the upper hand, and is preferred to places of eminence.

DISCRETION never shews its worth and dignity more than when it declines meddling with what rashness and presumption boldly attempt to perform : 'tis like a conscientious person's refusing to accept the possession of a title and estate to which he knows he has no right.

By a cautious discreet behaviour, we establish an opinion of our abilities, no less than by a chain of uninterrupted success. A temper averse to engage in dubious enterprizes, indicates a consciousness of what we are able to effect, together with a determination to proceed no farther.

MEDIOCRITY of talents, with carefulness and circumspection in our discourse, is usually of more weight and efficacy, than eloquence with impetuosity : as a
little

little with oeconomy goes farther than a great deal with profusion.

WE seldom indulge an impetuosity of thought and speech, without becoming violent and overbearing: a moderate capacity of arguing is more prevalent, while attended with mildness and complacency, because men hate the very appearance of compulsion.

DISCRETION is produced by a coalition of care and diffidence; an equal admixture of which is necessary, to prevent activity from degenerating into forwardness.

DISCRETION is the reconnoitring of ourselves and of others. Its peculiar property is to render us more solicitous to examine whether a subject is fit to be treated, than what to say upon it; as more judgment is shewn by avoiding certain topics, than by handling them in the most judi-

PEOPLE are always readier to thank us for our discretion than our wit : we exert the one to oblige them, the other to oblige ourselves.

WE always do ourselves some service by discretion ; but scarce ever fail to detriment ourselves through eagerness to be witty.

WIT has the empire of words and expressions ; but discretion dwells within, and is more usefully employed in regulating our thoughts. The first is like a shewy parading girl, fond of exhibiting herself abroad : the other, like a modest young woman, who shuns every occasion of making her appearance too common, and studies to improve herself in domestic accomplishments at home.

WIT is led by vanity, and is satisfied with the empty sound of praises : but discretion aims at more material ends, and labours

labours to gain the more substantial prizes of benevolence and friendship. The first is like a courtier, the summit of whose ambition is to enjoy the smiles of his sovereign, and who is content with the bare external signs of royal preference and favour, without sharing any in reality: the other is like a shrewd and subtle politician, who enters into the spirit of his master's designs; and by rendering himself serviceable and needful, becomes a man of importance.

M

LET-

L E T T E R X I V .

O N T H E

U S E O F G E N I U S A N D J U D G E M E N T .

EXTRAORDINARY parts are like great titles. The less we are exalted by them, the more we are beloved and honoured: the obtrusion of either, on all persons and occasions, only serves to excite jealousy and impatience. These are ever prompt to rise in opposition to a needless display of superiority, as subjects who think themselves over-taxed, are apt to murmur and revolt against their rulers.

To over-rate our worth is to lessen it. As men are hawk-eyed in discovering each other's imperfections, and equally dexterous in magnifying such defects as hurt their vanity, they will make our error in one point,

point, an argument of our deficiency in many.

PEOPLE are in general sufficiently willing to give us our due, while they are not sufferers by it, on the one hand ; and we can rest satisfied with a just measure of estimation, on the other : but by pretending to more, we are guilty of a sort of intellectual tyranny, which terminates in the contempt of our judgement ; in the same manner as a political one is destructive of civil authority.

SELF-LOVE is always on the watch, and, like an exact calculator, never over-balances the account in favour of any one ; but rather, like a tribune of the people among the Romans, is a severe animadvertor on the least encroachment of superiors upon his right.

MEN of eminent parts are often guilty of uncourteousness from use.

They seem to forget that an apparent consciousness of uncommon advantages, and an affectation to exhibit and publish their eminence, is a grievous eye-sore to their inferiors. 'Tis like a rich man's boasting of his opulence to such as are oppressed with poverty and distress; or like a healthy man's vaunting of his good constitution to those who are afflicted with sickness and pain.

HOWEVER great our abilities, the arrogance they inspire is usually much greater. Persons who feel the extent of their capacity, cannot easily divest themselves of the propensity to manifest it. Full of the importance of their own thoughts, they think themselves intitled to seize every opportunity of venting them.

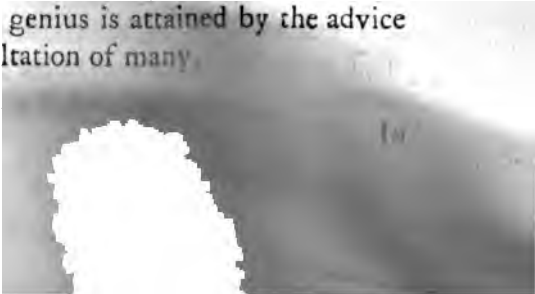
THE capital defect in men of genius, is their excessive confidence in its strength and efficacy. It renders them improvident of the means to redress mistakes, from
their

their immoderate conviction of infallible success ; like an ambitious potentate who, by over-rating his power, undertakes more than he can compass, and finds himself arrested in the middle of his career.

HENCE let us be careful to secure the favourable opinion of men of discernment and experience, ere we permit our genius to launch forth into the dangerous ocean of public inspection.

JUDGEMENT and criticism are the passport of genius. Without their previous and strictest examination, we cannot promise ourselves an indemnity from censure.

As the safety and grandeur of a state depend on the combination of more wise heads than one ; so the growth and perfection of genius is attained by the advice and consultation of many.



IN matters of government, ill successes are often owing to the slight and disregard shewn to speakers of inferior note ; so it frequently happens in the empire of genius, that a great one is lost or perverted for not having paid the homage of docility to a less.

THE most valuable proof of real genius is to discern and attend to the judicious ; as the true mark of a capacity to govern, in a king, is to distinguish and advise with men of abilities.

SUBMISSION to the strictures of an able friend is, in the department of genius, what spiritual counsel is in the moral system. As amendment of life and manners is the result of one, our thoughts and intellectual productions are rectified and improved by the other.

THE scale of genius is raised or lowered with amazing facility. A few alterations
have

have established the reputation of one, and the want of them have ruined that of another.

As the united voice of the majority is a tribunal from whence there is no appeal, the minutest revival should antecede, in private, whatever we design to expose in public. The refusal of its favour and countenance is a heavy depression of our courage, and a grievous degradation of our talents : however acknowledged by our friends and familiars, they will suffer in our own conceit, after such a condemnation.

THE most persuasive argument in persons of genius is to be polite and civilized. An unpliant untractable disposition and an unpolished behaviour in men of illuminated understandings, affect us in the same manner as the uncouthness and inelegance that characterise the person and breeding of a rustic beauty.

UNINTELLIGIBILITY is no uncommon complaint against men of genius : like eagles, they affect to soar out of sight, and wrap their meaning in phrases mysterious and obscure. These indicate, however, more crudity and indigestion of thought, than clearness and sublimity of conception.

PLAIN sense, unaffectedly express'd, is a readier method of manifesting genius, than the most laboured circumlocution : as the just proportion and symmetry of the body appears more visibly by a free and easy gait, than, by curious and difficult postures.

GENIUS is a treasure, of which if judgement has not the management, it infallibly becomes a prey to dissipation.

GENIUS without judgement is like an estate belonging to a minor, of which
others

others must have the administration, to render it of value to the proprietor.

MEN of genius are often ignorant of their own abilities, till the discovery of them is made by men of judgement. To these, according to the course of things, they are usually subservient : and without them, would frequently be of no service either to others or to themselves.

WE pay the tribute of admiration to genius, but that of deference to judgement.

A JUDICIOUS exertion of moderate parts is a proof of our respect for the public, which atones for many deficiencies.

GENIUS may often exist without taste or judgement ; but care and observation soon enable judgement to create a valent to genius.

A judicious conduct can supply the absence of genius ; but men of genius often have no conduct at all.

WITHOUT the concomitance of a deliberate and reflective turn of mind, genius proves unable, at the long-run, to cope with coolness and judgement. The first delights in motion without repose ; and like one, who, to shew his swiftness, runs himself out of breath rather than not be doing, will commit extravagancies : but the second allows an interval between rest and action ; and, like an experienced rider, by restraining a needless impetuosity, preserves his horse's speed and vigour, fresh and ready, for the critical moment of the race.

HENCE, let us consider genius as an instrument, of which if we neglect to learn the use and practice, it rusts and becomes a dead weight upon us, of no value and signification ; and if improperly
mana-

managed, will prove a trouble instead of a benefit. In the first instance, we shall at best resemble the keepers of a magazine ; since, strictly speaking, genius unexercised, like money unemployed, is rather in our custody than in our possession. In the second, we shall act like the factors to a company of merchants, who, by investing the sums they are intrusted with in the purchase of other commodities than they were directed, in lieu of perquisites and commissions, render themselves, by this contravention of their constituents orders, liable to penalties and losses.

L E T.

LETTER XV.

ON

LABOUR AND INDUSTRY
OF THE MIND.

THE talents of the mind are like lands unknown: our vigilance and self-trial, like skilful navigators, enable us to discover them; and our labour and assiduity, like an industrious colony, undertake their improvement and cultivation.

EXPERIENCE is the pilot we must employ to sound the depth and take the bearings of our understanding: like an uncertain and dangerous sea, unequally shallow and profound, it is in most men full of inconsistencies and inequalities.

WHEN we have, by a thorough examination, ascertained our intellectual gifts and possessions, we receive the same satisfaction, as on the settlement of a dubious law-

law-suit. They become, like an undisputed patrimony, entirely subject to our will and option, either to waste and neglect, or to increase and ameliorate.

PEOPLE meet with a number of difficulties in life, much less from a deficiency of abilities, than from having, through want of self-inspection, mistaken the plan which nature had originally intended for their pursuit.

ANOTHER cause of miscarriage is, not so much the neglect and non-exertion of our talents, as the never trying them to the utmost : few men, or none perhaps, ever knew the full extent of their capacity.

As this scrutiny requires more than ordinary toil and trouble, and a greater degree of nicety in our observations than the generality of men are willing to bestow, we pass it by ; in the same manner as the indolent possessor of an estate is averse to examine the means of improving it.

HENCE

HENCE it is that our endeavours are seldom adequately resolute and earnest, in proportion to the attainment of our ends: we are warm in the formation of our designs; but often as cold in their execution, as if we acted for the concern of others.

THE truth is, that in the prosecution of their various schemes, men are desirous of uniting their ease and interest, which, like two agreeable companions, render the journey of life smooth and pleasant: but as these, like men of different aims and opinions, do not always agree, it often becomes necessary to part with one, in order to retain the other. Now, as present gratification is the powerfulest argument with most persons, the charms of ease, which offers immediate enjoyment, prevail over the distant promises of interest: we often resign the most considerable expectations in future, for momentary pleasure at hand; like men who rashly make over their noblest reversions for a trifling gratuity.

A MAIN obstruction to success is our forgetfulness to anticipate, by a cool review and calculation, the hardships and obstacles that will probably attend the enterprise we go upon.

INSTEAD of this indispensable premeditation, we usually begin by representing to our imagination all the flattering pictures and gilded visions that can inspire us with a determination to proceed: and thus it is, that, after setting out with confidence, we are arrested by despondency.

RESOLUTION proceeds from an impartial weighing of the motives that induce us to engage in any undertaking, together with the evidence of their propriety. When these have been duly considered, and the scale of reasonable expectation preponderates in favour of success, then will perseverance have a solid foundation.

THE principal opponent and retarder of all enterprises, is indolence; which, like
a do-

a domestic enemy, clogs the motions of the state at home, and prevents its influence and operations abroad.

COMPETITION is like a field of battle, where the victory is won, not by the possession, but the exertion of the powers we have ; and where he who strives most, generally comes off the conqueror.

IN every kind of strife, advantages are much seldomer gained by any manifest and visible superiority of parts, than by surmounting our proneness to inactivity, and rousing our faculties to action.

CAPACITY for labour and industry is the universal charter of all classes and conditions : 'tis the tenure by which mankind holds every donation of nature.

EXTRAORDINARY gifts and qualifications are like special warrants ; which authorize those who receive them to put some particular purport in execution, and entitle

entitle them to respect and distinction, in order to give weight and dignity to their errand.

BUT as uncommon privileges and concessions should not be frequent in the political system, no more are they so in the ordinary course of Nature : her general intention is, that the discovery of her treasures, and the use of her blessings, should be the recompence and property of application and assiduity.

ACTIVITY soon enables us to cease the complaint, so groundless and untrue in the mouth of most men, that Nature has denied them abilities. 'Tis sloth and averfeness to bestir ourselves, that keep them concealed from our knowledge ; like a negligent steward who hides from his master the real situation of his affairs. As cultivation only can decide on the barrenness or fertility of lands, so it is by trial only that we can prove our talents or defects.

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THE slenderest abilities, in the possession of an industrious man, are like a small army under the command of a skilful general: though he may not perform great exploits, he will acquit himself with honour, and do service to the cause he maintains.

IN the same manner, the judicious employment of our parts, however inconsiderable, if it will not carry us to the summit of grandeur and prosperity, will yet enable us to go successfully through the duties of our vocation.

THE most splendid capacity is, on the contrary, while unseconded by cultivation, like a fertile country in the possession of an idle people, who by their neglect and laziness remain in a state of indigence.

THROUGH negligence and want of improvement, the brightest qualifications are those precisely that avail us least: as

the beautifullest plants, for want of timely care, prove always of least value. We gradually become unequal to our support, and dwindle into objects of general slight and contempt. These we never fail to experience, as well as to deserve, in proportion as we have had the means of procuring esteem and respect.

THE reason why indolence is the most pernicious of all vices, is, that it not only hinders the exercise of every good quality, but even suppresses the very desire and native appetency to action, and throws all the faculties into a state of lethargy. While we remain active, even the very aversion to sloth is a principle from whence much good may flow. It is a disposition that will never fail to secure to us well-wishers; and at length to promote our interest. But, whenever our character is branded with inactivity, our expectations of thriving become absurd; as the hopes and aid of our friends are jointly at an end.

LETTER XVI.

ON

EMULATION.

YOU cannot be too frequently taken up in the review and contemplation of meritorious actions. The praise and glory resulting from transcendent worth, is a spur that is felt even by the most insensible. It kindles in generous natures that happy spirit of emulation, which cherishes and matures the growth of every latent seed of merit and perfection.

WHILE attention is struck with the splendor that accompanies great deeds, self-love is ruminating how to partake of the prize; and, through the consciousness of its value, incites us to deserve it.

EMULATION is the touchstone of a capacious

cious mind, which is naturally attracted by the sympathy subsisting between great examples and great abilities.

A LOFTY soul feels at the sight of what is praise-worthy, a sort of congeniality with its own disposition ; as the individuals of a family are known by a similitude of features.

EXAMPLES, like proclamations, are set up in the public view of men, to let them know their duty ; and that no one may complain of wanting means of information.

LAWS are the text, and examples the commentary that explain them.

EXAMPLES, like comparisons in poetry, are an illustration of the subject in question.

THE imitation of great examples has in

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all times formed the character of eminent men. Heroes would never have existed, but for the desire of surpassing others, or of not being surpassed themselves.

THE most complete speculations on our duty affect only the judgement : we seldom proceed to action till the imagination is warmed ; and this is only done by the force of example.

As pictures drawn from the life exhibit a much better resemblance of persons than all the descriptions given in words ; examples, in the like manner, more fully represent what we are to do, than any verbal instruction.

HENCE let our memory be well stored with those passages in the lives of excellent men, that have endeared them to their own, and rendered them famous to after, times.

A judicious selection of deeds worthy imitation, would compose as perfect and
useful

useful a body of practical morality, as could be desired, for the regulation of manners, and the improvement of society.

WE scarce read of a man renowned in any capacity whatever, who did not primitively rouse himself by a spirit of emulation.

EMULATION is a scorn of inferiority, that summons all our talents to the keenest exertion.

'Tis the strongest proof of our own merit; for unless we had some ourselves, we could not be sensible of it in others.

WE cannot too studiously patronize that fervency of mind which leads us to excel others; for if we do not succeed in that, we are sure at the worst of ameliorating ourselves.

We shall always obtain some part
our aim; we should not out-strip
those

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those whom we first proposed, we certainly shall many others.

EMULATION inspires us with an acuteness that enlightens the prosecution of our designs, and animates our efforts to surpass competitors: like rival generals, who lose no advantages, and make the most of every opportunity, we leave no qualification unemployed, and try all our abilities to the utmost.

THE warmth of emulation is to the soul, what artificial heat is to plants. It produces life and vigour, where none otherwise would have existed; and brings forth fruits that, without it, would never have grown in the soil that is made to bear them.

WERE it not for emulation, mere necessity would be the rule and limit of our labours. All things would wear the face of imperfection and rudeness, and we should

should still remain in our pristine state of ignorance and barbarity,

THE knowledge of our own capacity depends on emulation. It forces us to search within ourselves for all the help and assistance we can find there, in order not to be overcome.

PRIDE and vanity act the part of besiegers on this occasion, and oblige us, like a garrison hard beset, and unwilling to surrender, to seek out and visit narrowly every secret spot and every hidden recess where stores and ammunition may possibly lie concealed.

EMULATION is like the collision of flints, and produces a fire that is quickly communicated wherever it finds any susceptibility of impression. Like lightning, it flashes through the deepest obscurity, and discloses faculties, of which common perception was not aware.

OUR

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Our endeavours are never more spirited and earnest, than when the strife is for superiority. Passion and reason act in concert; we are guided by all the coolness and circumspection of the one, and impelled by all the fire and impetuosity of the other.

No motives can influence human nature more powerfully than those which flow from emulation. Our self-love is then more peculiarly at stake. Our views are not merely confined to the single object that occupies us: Ambition steps in, and strains every nerve to be foremost in the field of competition.

THE shame of being out-done, sounds, as it were, an alarm to the soul, which rouses all its attention. It instantly collects its whole capacity; as an army, on hearing of the enemy's approach, calls in every detachment, and musters all its force for battle.

How

How often, when all other motives have wanted prevalence, has the dread of incurring shame from the super-eminence of others, raised us from a state of supineness, revived our dormant qualities, and given additional powers to our whole system !

EMULATION creates and keeps alive the noblest designs and pursuits of men. 'Tis the balance of power throughout human nature ; and preserves the moral and intellectual character of polished nations on a respectable level.

EMULATION is the parent and nurse of merit and reputation, in the same proportion as indolence is the source of meanness and contempt.

ZEAL, activity, vigilance, and industry, are the children of emulation ; and, like the generous offspring of an illustrious stem, do honour to their origin, by their fidelity to the cause they maintain.

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THE sovereign and infallible efficacy of emulation arises from its incompatibility with sloth or negligence.

IN the same measure as these depress and sink us in apathy, and render us listless and inobservant, the other awakens our attention, and sharpens our sight, to discover the qualifications and accomplishments of others; in order to set ourselves on a parity of worth, by a laudable imitation.

By perseveringly bringing ourselves to the test of every experiment, we happily discover at last some native endowment, long unnoticed; which makes ample amends for deficiencies, and fully rewards the diligence we have employed in searching it: like diggers in a mine, whose riches lie deep, by patience and assiduity, meet finally with an adequate recompence for all their labour.

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LETTER XVII.

ON

CONTENTMENT AND MODERATION.

IT cannot be denied that serenity of mind is partly constitutional, and depends in some measure on the situation our body is in ; whether in a state of health or sickness, of ease or suffering.

Much, however, is left in this matter to our own effecting. When we complain of inward perturbation, we surely must be conscious, that, a few cases excepted, a remedy is at hand, if we are willing to take a little trouble to procure it.

REFLECTION is an oracle, which men should not so far consult ; and there are few

few mental infirmities for which it affords not a certain, and generally a speedy cure.

MOST of the agitations of the soul arise from internal causes : external ones, excepting corporeal pain, have scarce any influence, unless by our own consent.

WE are almost always our own tormentors ; by yielding to delusion, and viewing things in the light that is given them by the caprice and wantonness of imagination, instead of attending to that which proceeds from cool thinking.

THIS seldom is allowed any suffrage, where the passions have the ascendancy. These admit of nothing that can thwart their impetuosity. They resemble a pernicious favourite, who, intent upon ingrossing the whole confidence of his sovereign, excludes whoever refuses to co-operate with his own measures.

THOUGHT

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THOUGHT and consideration are generally treated like the counsellors of a forward prince ; who allows them weight, while they coincide with his opinions ; but, if they happen to differ, immediately discards them.

By a continual adherence to false notions, we at length become incapable of enjoying mental tranquillity ; as by a long course of wrong and mistaken medicines, we oftentimes totally ruin our constitution.

THE various modes of diversion we have recourse to, in order to efface the remembrance, or deaden the sensation of crosses and vexations, may perhaps induce a temporary suspension of disquietude : but they are at best a palliative, that may disperse the humours for a while, but never effects a complete cure.

WHEN

WHEN dissipation is resorted to instead of serious reasoning, 'tis like a patient's preferring a specious mountebank to a regular-bred physician.

REASON, like a solemn monitor, has an air of business and gravity, that frights the levity and airiness of unthinking people. They hearken to advice, as young prodigal heirs look to their accounts; which are seldom seen in any other light than that of intrusive guests, whose presence disturbs the pleasure and entertainment of the company.

IN these respects, mankind may be said to treat reason and reflection as school-boys do their masters; whose absence they are always glad of.

THERE is no industry greater than that of some people to create and discover causes of uneasiness and discontent. Their selfishness or vanity are indefatigable in repre-

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representing to them the various enjoyments, from which they are debarred by the malignity of fate, and intitled to by the indisputableness of their merit.

CERTAIN it is, however, that most of our complaints of hardships and injustice are founded either on the over-weening opinion of our deserts, or on the neglect of those means to redress our pretended grievances, that are put into the hands of all men indiscriminately.

HAPPINESS is like a country famous for its fertility and excellencies of every kind; wherein we have all an equal right of residing; and the road to which lies open to all who are desirous to assert their common privilege.

BUT there is a set of necessary directions which we must learn and follow, before we can promise ourselves to reach the end of our journey; otherwise we shall wander

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wide

wide of the mark ; and, instead of felicity, we shall deviate into the immense wilds of errors and perplexities.

IF we arraign ourselves before the tribunal of candid self-examination, and call to a faithful remembrance all the opportunities we have neglected, and all those that remain unimproved, perhaps no man can justly lay the blame on fate, so much as on himself, if he has been involved in difficulties ; or, if he still continues unfortunate, can deny 'tis the effect of his own mismanagement.

THERE is no situation but allows of more alleviation than we are willing to own. Pride is above admonition, and will not condescend to necessary compliances. Thus we are venting our execration on Fortune, when we should be accusing our own unwillingness to adopt the measures she has planned for us.

THE fact is, that we are less taken up in making the most of our condition, than in contriving how to change it for what we wrongly conceive will prove a better ; like thoughtless giddy youths,* who forsake ease and plenty at home, in hopes of finding greater riches abroad.

THE fundamental error throughout our whole life is, that we do not in reality make happiness the final aim of our endeavours. Without peace of mind, and moderation of desires, no one can be happy ; but we have generally something in view that is inimical to both.

PEACE of mind does not so much consist in absolute tranquility and exemption from solicitude, as in a manly resignation to our destiny, and a cheerful employment of our faculties. Moderation is less an absence of desire to possess those objects which are worth having, than enjoyment of those we have

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In order to obtain peace and contentment, we must be active and laborious.

THE weight of some things through long habit is hardly felt ; but the longer we submit to that of idleness, the more it becomes intolerable. The burthen of labour we soon experience to be lighter than we apprehended ; and to resemble some objects, which look large at a distance, but are lessened by proximity.

As nature has so framed us, that we cannot be peaceable nor satisfied unless in a state of activity, either in theory or practice ; our minds, continually intent on some design, are seeking for action in the midst of rest ; and would be miserable, were they cut off from the prospect and expectation of business.

WHILE our faculties are in motion, our mind enjoys the greatest serenity ; and, as the more we keep ourselves employed, the

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the less we relish indolence, we soon contract that temper and disposition to which only happiness can belong; an aversion to loss of time resulting from the pleasure we feel in converting it to proper use; and an aptitude to taste repose, from the gratefulness of its vicissitude after labour.

WHEN we cast our eyes abroad, and review the various classes of life, we readily agree, that none are debarred the acquisition of content; and yet, when we look at home, we can always meet with something to obstruct its entrance.

WE can display our eloquence and ingenuity in shewing that mankind has the power of making cheerfulness the companion of adversity and want; and yet in the midst of ease and opulence, we know the secret of being discomforted.

EVEN sickness and the incident to our nature are required

able to exclude interior tranquility. Yet how often, in spite of health and vigour, are we guilty of lamenting the defects of our constitution,

Nothing has been more amply proved than our capacity for happiness ; nothing more frequently disproved than the solidity of our enjoyments.

No word is ever used in more instances, and is in truth applicable to so many, as that of Happiness, since we may be happy in almost every situation imaginable : but the thing itself is what by our conduct we seem studiously to keep at a distance.

HAPPINESS, like a pacific neighbour, is willing to enter into an alliance and confederacy : but we stand, as it were, on punctilios, and, like unskilful negociators, refuse to treat for want of a few trifling formalities.

HAPPINESS offers itself to the friendship and intimacy of all ; but is denied admit-

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admittance, for refusing to pay homage to Caprice ; who, like a false friend, stands in the way of union, and prevents reconciliation, unless his own interest is first consulted.

WE are all willing to be happy ; but then it must be on our own terms, which are commonly very unreasonable.

IN those ideas of happiness with which we amuse ourselves, vanity, selfishness, and inconsistency, have the direction of the pencil ; and generally form such pictures, as probability can give no sanction to.

NOTHING is more common than to acknowledge the unreasonableness of our desires ; and yet nothing more common than to continue as fixed and wedded to them, as if we had a right to be unreasonable.

HENCE it is that a man's wishes and expectations seldom agree together.

BUT

BUT the worst is, that we carry into practice the follies of our theory; and after having laid the plan of our hopes on the foundation of fancy, we proceed as if it were grounded on reason.

SELFISHNESS is never satisfied, and is always less delighted with its own acquisitions, than displeased at those of others.

VANITY thinks its portion unworthy of its own importance; and aims perpetually at doing itself compleater justice.

INCONSISTENCY, the follower and slave of both, to remedy the deficiencies they complain of, exerts all its powers, and perverts imagination, judgement, and common-sense, in order to give them satisfaction.

IMAGINATION is let loose, and suffered to run wild; judgement is hoodwinked,
and

and led by whim and fancy ; and common-sense is silenced, and deprived of all manner of suffrage.

IN this situation is every man who indulges a propensity to look forward in slight and discontent at his present state. We have all more or less some tincture of this infatuation ; which, like a bitter ingredient of great force, however inconsiderable in quantity, is able to sour the whole mass of life, and render ineffectual the drift and purpose of all that Fortune has done in our favour.

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C O N C L U S I O N.

AFTER leading you through an examination of the principal virtues and vices that adorn or disgrace human nature, and of the chief qualifications and failings that render men amiable or disagreeable, we may conclude by a summary recapitulation of what has been laid before you in the foregoing Epistles, if one may so intitle them,

THEIR main intent is to confirm you in the persuasion of the necessity of being completely virtuous, in order to be completely happy. In proportion as we approach to perfection, or depart from it, we shall experience contentment or dissatisfaction.

You are now, therefore, to form a steady resolution of never swerving from those
rules

rules of acting which you have been taught with so much care, from an experimental conviction, that you cannot without them perform the journey of life with credit and applause from others, and the more substantial comfort of approbation from yourself.

ABOVE all things, be convinced that men look to the heart more than to the head: the goodness of the latter instead of apologising for the badness of the former, will render us more liable to scorn and detestation.

To shine in public, and carry the prize of wit and extraordinary abilities, is certainly deserving of praise, while we thereby propose the lawful service of ourselves or of others: but when the final motive is iniquitous, we only lay ourselves open to hatred and contempt.

HOWEVER considerable the perquisites of villany may prove, and ever con-

spicuous they may render our station, internal peace, without which there is no felicity, never is the portion of those who act a part which their conscience cannot approve.

WHATEVER hardship and distress a strict adherence to honesty may reduce us to, the burden is not so heavy as that with which the sense of guilt will oppress us. What is more common than to see the liveliest cheerfulness in the midst of want, and, on the contrary, gloominess and dejection in the bosom of plenty ; the first resulting from innocence, the second from remorse ?

LET us not be deceived by the glitter of appearances : they are often assumed in order to hide a bad cause. Many a one puts on an air of gaiety and ease, whose heart, if exposed to view, would astonish us at the possibility of dissembling so much misery,

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misery, and concealing it under so fair a mask.

EVIL carries with it an infallible punishment. As it is contrary to our nature, we can enjoy no rest, and it operates on our minds as poison on our bodies, which cannot be easy until it is expelled.

VIRTUE, on the other hand, never fails to prove the principal part of its reward; by infusing serenity, and precluding the agitations arising from passions that are not kept in due subjection.

THE point that has been chiefly laboured in the preceding Essays, was to convince you, that an unguarded indulgence in our desires, is the principal source of misery and vexation.

WHEN we are happily arrived at that situation of mind which can look with
calm-

calmness on those objects towards which usually our appetites hurry us with violence, we then may congratulate ourselves, as travellers that have completed the better half of their journey.

It cannot be too often repeated in your thoughts, that happiness consists much less in the obtaining of our wishes, than in making the most of what we already possess.

When we have conquered that inordinate proneness to what is out of our power, we shall be the abler to look at home on those things which Fortune has put into our hands.

The generality of men delight in laying-out plans of desirable contingencies. In this they have as sure a guide to rely upon, as a mariner who should attempt to calculate the length of time he designed for his voyage, together with the favourable

ble or contrary winds that might befall him while it lasted.

THE sole principle on which to build felicity, is consequently to employ the present hour ; and not to flatter yourself with precarious expectations of better to come.

MORE disappointments happen through the weak reliance formed upon alluring prospects, than from any other cause.

THEY are often like a sun-shiny morning, full of the brightest promises of fair weather ; but deceitfully antecedent to rainy and tempestuous days.

THESE reflections are not intended to dash your hopes : on the contrary, they are meant as the only solid foundation of reasonable hope ; which, as it is the most agreeable sensation to our nature, we ought

ought to render, as much as possible, secure and permanent.

Nothing sooner leads to despondency than hope improperly indulged. To be thrown from towering expectations, and to find one-self in distress where we promised ourselves undoubted success, is like being cast from the top of a precipice : our faculties are stunned, as it were, by unexpected calamity ; and it is with difficulty our minds recover from the sudden fall.

LET the most lively and cheerful hope be familiar to your heart ; and learn sometimes to face adversity with courage : but be as cautious not to suffer hope to degenerate into confidence ; which, like a false friend, will promise most and perform least.

If we would go securely through the world, let us not too fondly cherish the probability of our wishes : let us sometimes

times call in the help of diffidence, as a counterpoize to that sanguine forwardness, which is so apt to create perplexities where circumspection would have found none, or would have easily overcome any.

THOUGH Diffidence may be a timid counsellor, and rather inclined to represent things in an unfavourable light, still he will not lead you into error, by describing as practicable that which is impossible to effect, and therefore vain to attempt.

THE best counsels you will receive, must be produced by your own observations on the conduct of men.

HE that asks advice, seldom intends to be wholly directed by it. This would suppose that others know his affairs better than himself; which is false to a proverb.

YET nothing denotes a wise man more than readiness to consult, and docility to hearken to instruction. But in order to make proper use of the experience and

good sense of others, we must be well prepared and seasoned, by timely reflections on those transactions to which we have been witnesses, and on the character of those who acted in them : in a word, we must have studied men and things, as far as they came within our cognisance. Without this necessary preparation, the directions we receive, will turn out of little more effect than weapons intrusted to the hands of those who never learned their use.

THE study of mankind is the most profitable in the course of life and business, but there is no study that requires so unremitting an application,

IT is a common notion, that to dwell among men, and to be conversant in the various affairs of the world, intitles a man to the knowledge of human nature ; yet we daily see persons grown grey in the different drudgeries of life, raw and inexpert in very essential points.

THE

THE reason is, that the generality give themselves little or no trouble in the examination of events, and the discrimination of characters. They are willing to take mankind by the lump ; without considering the immense difference between the appearances and the realities of men and of their actions.

MEN seldom agree much more than in the general outlines of nature. They are not only of contradictory makes to each other, but are at times totally inconsistent with themselves.

STUDY therefore human nature not only by general speculation, but by a close attention to every individual in particular with whom you are connected.

SUCH an investigation will soon teach you to be less surprized at the strange vicissitudes of conduct and character you will frequently experience in the

same person, than to find any man gifted with uniformity at all seasons.

IN your examination of individuals include your own, so far as it relates to the subject of your enquiry.

WE seldom pronounce true verdicts on the objects of our affection or attachment. Partiality always interposes ; it magnifies their good qualities, and diminishes their failings. 'Tis somewhat like the fondness of a parent for his progeny. As these are the children of nature, so are the others the children of our choice.

THIS partiality, however, is in some measure justifiable. It is our interest to be pleased with those who compose the circle of our connections.

WHERE antipathy or disaffection prevail, we are no less apt to form erroneous judgments ; with this difference to our dis-

disadvantage, that by under-rating the worth of those whom we dislike, we hurt ourselves, by throwing them at a distance from reconciliation.

BEFORE we pass our judgment on either friends or foes, we ought to annihilate, if possible, all thought of ourselves; otherwise, instead of judges, we become advocates or plaintiffs.

THEY for whom we feel the most indifference, are the likeliest to meet with impartiality: of the characters of such we always frame the clearest conceptions.

LET us, in the mean time, if we mean to speak and act wisely, join solitude to society; and take it for granted, that no man can make a figure abroad, who is not company for himself at home.

DISSIPATION of mind is the sure consequence of too much frequentation of

what is called Company: people who live in a round of visitings, must necessarily lose a very considerable portion of the time requisite for the improvement of their intellects, and are accordingly found in common to be superficial.

DIVIDE yourself; therefore, almost equally between the living and the dead; and rest persuaded, that the most eminent characters in active life have been as often formed upon departed, as upon existing models.

WHILE we are bustling abroad in the croud, we have seldom coolness enough to attend duly to the solid intrinsic merit of great or good actions: but when we are alone, we collect our scattered thoughts, and employ them in the undisturbed contemplation of the worthy characters that pass in review, as it were, before a settled and studious mind.

As

As the reverence of the Deity is the beginning of moral goodness, so is the love of study and reading the commencement of all mental perfection.

It is the pitiful plea of Ignorance and Pride, two intimates that seldom dwell asunder, that speculation usurps and consumes the time we should bestow upon action; and that great studiers and readers are seldom great performers.

How so palpable an aspersion should have ever been countenanced, is the more surprising, as the least reflection must instantly remind us, that all the improvements in arts and sciences are no less due to profound speculation than to assiduous practice.

BUT without condescending to answer any further such frivolous cavillers, will they deny that the greatest men of antiquity, and of modern times, have either
cultivated

cultivated learning themselves, or been the favourers of learned men?

WHEN we consider the multitudes that devote themselves to indolence and vacancy of mind, we cannot be astonished, that, conscious of their emptiness, they should strive to pull others down to their level; and endeavour to be thought equal to their superiors, by giving out that application to study is of no efficacy in the formation of an accomplished character.

LET them rail on, in despite of their own conviction. The happy consequences of diligence and studiousness are too evident not to put them to the blush, as often as they have the effrontery to assert such notorious falsehoods.

It was thought necessary to forewarn you of this enmity to learning, that you might be upon your guard against the many votaries of idleness and dissipation

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who abound at present in this island, much more than ever they have done since the revival of literature.

LET it, however, be uppermost in your mind, that speculation is only recommended as the associate of practice : they are to be constant companions ; otherwise their strength and efficacy operate only by halves.

THE greatest successes and the greatest disappointments are equally produced by their union or their separation : while they remain asunder, practice works in the dark, and succeeds only through chance ; and speculation is at best but trying experiments.

ACCUSTOM yourself to cast your thoughts and actions into the same mould, if one may so express it : perform and reflect at the same moment.

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YOU will in a short time inure yourself to this method of acting, by resisting impetuosity in your determinations. Without coolness and circumspection, abilities are but an inlet to dangers and disasters.

LIKE other good qualities, they are attainable by perseverance in learning them. As they are the only secure foundation of both public and private prosperity, you cannot be too earnest in their acquisition.

THE concluding advice of this valedictory epistle shall be, to consider yourself as an actor preparing for his first appearance on the stage. The eyes of an audience, on such occasions, are more attentive to the performance of a beginner than to the merit of a veteran. In the same manner, your introduction into life will be accompanied by the solicitude of all who are interested in your welfare; and no less by the particular notice and examination of your new acquaintance.

IN

IN the circles you will frequent, on your entrance into the world, keen and severe critics will be found : these make it their business narrowly to observe fresh-comers ; and the judgments they pronounce, though sometimes wrong, remain a long time uncontroverted.

To obviate the ill consequences that will necessarily result from the unfavourable opinion of such persons, is the first object of your care,

THE most effectual means to compass this desirable end, is modesty. No qualification fits more becomingly on youth. It is a protection to his inexperience, and an ornament to the accomplishments he may possess : without it his abilities are disgusting and if he wants parts, he becomes insupportable.

MODESTY is equally acceptable to the sensible and discerning of both sexes : it is an infallible proof of merit, since modesty
itself,

itself, if we have no other, is a very valuable quality. But it seldom is unaccompanied. Modesty is the diffidence of men of sense, and proceeds from cautiousness; which always supposes a reflecting mind.

A MARKED desire and care not to give offence, is the first step to please: it proves deference and respect for those you converse with, and interests their vanity in your favour.

LET modesty then be your motto: wear it about you, as a charm against the inquisitive eye of observation: and finally, trust implicitly to that experience which daily shews, that no character will sooner gain us friendship, and preserve us from enmity, than that of a modest young man.

THE END.